

# MACLEAN'S

## CONFLICT AT ANY COST

Arthur Kent on Washington's intransigent war machine

## QUICK FIX FOR ADDICTS

Vancouver's controversial safe-injection program

## ROCK OF AGES

On learning music later in life

## THE PLUCK OF THE IRISH

On the eve of St. Patrick's Day, SHARON DOYLE DRIEDGER remembers growing up in one of Canada's oldest immigrant communities



THE AUTHOR (SECOND FROM RIGHT) AS A CHILD

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**Gwaii Haanas** These are the mythical waters of Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlotte Islands, home to giant kelp forests—ecosystems more diverse than rainforests. More than 500,000 creatures can be found in just one square metre of kelp forest. Rich in nutrients, Gwaii Haanas provides crucial feeding grounds for humpback whales, orcas, dolphins and sea lions. For eight years, World Wildlife Fund and the Haida Nation have been working to get Canada to zone these waters

as a Marine Protected Area. WWF has funded research. WWF has created a conservation plan. WWF has convinced the oil & gas industry to give up its drilling rights. Yet still, nothing has been done. When will Canada protect Gwaii Haanas? When will Canada start protecting other crucial areas on our coasts? With your help, we'll get the government to act now. Join our team. Call WWF at 1-800-26-PANCA or visit [wwf.ca/marine](http://wwf.ca/marine). Let's leave our children a living planet.









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## MACLEAN'S BEHIND THE SCENES



### A MOVING EXPERIENCE

Ah the joys of moving! The clutter. The chaos. Not to mention the virtual certainty that something important will disappear into a black hole, never to be seen again.

Now multiply the size of that task many times over and imagine the logistics of transplanting an entire news magazine to a new location. That's been the challenge over the past six months as Maclean's staff prepared to join the rest of the Rogers family at the company's campus, One Mount Pleasant Road in Toronto.

Maclean's move last weekend was part of the transfer of Rogers Publishing to the new location, says Alysia Witz, the Business Manager with Rogers Publishing News & Business Group (above, right, with Editorial Services Director Chris Johnston, left, and Advertising Services Manager Kathryn Murphy). There, the company joined Rogers Cable, Rogers AT&T Wireless, Rogers Communications and Rogers Media.

The move represents an important step forward for Canada's weekly news magazine, adds Paul Jones, Senior Vice-President of Rogers Publishing Ltd. and Publisher of Maclean's.

"We're very excited about this. For the first time, all of our English-language magazines—including *Maclean's*, *Canadian Business*, *PROFIT*, *Your Guide To Business Success*, *Today's Parent*, *For and Chatsline*—will be together under one roof. And because the new campus is dedicated to the Rogers family, it offers much improved amenities, which will facilitate communication and help us to work even more effectively."

While most Maclean's staffers only had to pack up their offices, our IT and telephone people and many others worked round-the-clock last weekend to get everything set up at the new location. Thanks to their heroic (and sleep-deprived) efforts we won't miss a beat.

You can reach Maclean's at 1-800-764-1388. Our Subscriber Services number is unchanged at 1-888-MACLEAN'S (1-888-632-5326).

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## THE MAIL

they have money and might. We hate them [the politicians, that is] because of what they do with their money and might.

**Patrice Comeau, Fredericton**

As an American living in Canada, I was appalled and deeply offended by the equation of anti-American sentiment with anti-Semitism. McDonald's comments are pernicious and unbecoming of Canadians who legitimately question and speak out against the actions of the American government and the complacency of many of my fellow citizens for their tacit approval of a history of unjust actions at home and abroad. Sentiment and protestation are alive and well in most of the world—perhaps they are fundamental aspects of human nature. They are most certainly alive in the United States where most people haven't a clue who Canadians are other than having some vague notion that they play hockey, drink a lot of beer and live in all those territories. Mature friendship requires not blindly following someone down a dangerous path, but making their own and saying, "I love and respect you, but you are on the wrong road and I will not go with you."

**Sandra Melnick, Peterborough Ont.**

Perhaps your readers will draw some measure of assurance from these words of Winston Churchill: "The Americans will always do the right thing—after they've exhausted all the alternatives." Perhaps we can help them do better, sooner.

**James Tarnes, Montreal**

We protest the U.S. war against Iraq because it's immoral and illegitimate, not because we hate Americans. We protest the U.S.-led implementation of global capitalism because we prefer the welfare of people over the welfare of corporations, not because we hate Americans. In our protest, we are led by Norman Chomsky, Ralph Nader and Michael Moore—Americans all. The anti-Americanism of which McDonald speaks is a Canadian's moral duty.

**Jim Gault, Victoria**

### Pot shots

Brian Bergman's thoughts on how to approach cannabis were on target ("Just say 'yes,'" *Money*, March 3). Should police spend their time chasing marijuana, when drunk drivers are 30,000 times more dangerous



than the average user? In my 15 years as a police officer, I handled some 2,000 incidents, not one of which involved a "stoned" driver. I never went to one call for service generated by the use of cannabis. Cannabis is not a social problem and rarely a personal one.

**Howard A. Woodhull, Aurora, Ont.**

Brian Bergman warned that Canada's ability to adopt a new marijuana policy that would improve public safety and health is constrained by the potential reaction of the United States. This fear is seriously exaggerated. Don't forget that the Republicans over the strong objections of our labour unions. Here the NAFTA debate was about opening up our borders to trade with Mexico. The critics debate took place against the unacknowledged backdrop of the U.S.-Mexico border being the principal point of entry of heroin, cocaine and methamphetamine. The likelihood that the U.S. would seriously damage vital economic interests with Canada when both of our economies are hurting simply because Canada exposed America's profound hypocrisy around marijuana is extremely low.

**Mike E. Sterling, Silver Spring, Md.**

Grow up and stop trying to monopolize the pot business and legalize it. Legitimate legal behaviour. All that was missing from

the article were some four-and-five-olds in the playground enlisting the two pot-smoking teens who have no other way to induce giggles and gain an appreciation of mischief. As well, I guess pot smokers will have to wait for legislation that accommodates their needs when dealing with assets such as driving while under the influence of pot. I wonder how much that will cost.

**Dr. Leonard Garbus, Mississauga, Ont.**

### Parallel universe

I worry that my eight-year-old son is going to grow up without grasping the essential social skills that one used to need to succeed in this world—such as negotiation, problem solving, dealing with disappointment and defeat—if he doesn't stop playing his internet Game Boy ("I'll be in another world," he crows, March 3). It's worse than the hypochondria my generation exhibited while we watched the tube.

**Marjalee Nelson Myllykari, Calgary**

### Listing love

I loved the interview with rock 'n' roll DJ Red Robinson ("They liked the energy," *Q&A*, March 3). I have always felt he was in the business because he loved it, pure and simple, and he was always the voice of his peers. I loved him when I was 14 and I love him now at 55.

**Bonnie Snik, Abbotsford B.C.**



Canada



## WATCH A NEW GENERATION HIT THEIR STRIDE

I started skating when I was three. In Salt Lake, I had the chance to realize my lifelong dream of winning an individual Olympic gold medal. And after all those years and sacrifices, I finally accomplished my dream. In 2010, I would like to be there with our athletes. Just to know and feel the home country fans being right there gives you the boost to compete. The feeling is just unbelievable, and it's going to be even better next time around.

Marc Gagnon, 2002 Gold Medalist, Speed Skating  
Montreal, Quebec

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## THEWEEK



### ScoreCard

**Canadian Premier**  
HMCS Vancouver sets sail for Persian Gulf, opens after scrapping antique Sea King from deck. Defence has its seemingly replacement, ordering Liberator city choice of new choppers still open to minor than can be said of Sea Kings

**Winter Village**  
Waiting 100 top level to build "the best" from Vancouver, despite they know on B.C.'s hopes for 2010 Olympics. Meanwhile, free-spirited PM has legacy on his mind. Where would prefer Whistler moved?

**SENATOR**  
Proposal to honour dozen members of upper chamber with chance to meet-up with for group that's taken a liking. With better to offer to be a civil civil? Just and saying clear. Did Canada Post not intervene calls to strong out the Senate?

**TRAIL**  
Long hours, last food and rubber-chicken dinner followed the sense of self heart attack. "Toxic" funded personal trainers and sought for way of getting members to shape up. The police how is available.

**A MATERIAL**  
The world's best again its characterized child, saying that for the illustrated children's books. Corbin is the latest show that she, her show all photo book. As Material that gets monthly post behind can only regret badly (Liz Goodridge) More already taken.

### Preparation | The world practises for the horrors of war

Perhaps not since the summer of 1939 has the world shuffled so methodically toward war, with so many eyes wide open. History's footfalls can be heard in the deliberate manning of large armies on Iraq's frontiers, in the convulsions of last-ditch diplomacy, and in the resigned acceptance of peace marches and "human shields." Many of these, Canadians among them, left Iraq last week after authorities tried to place them outside power stations and communications antennas, rather than the schools and hospitals they felt they were coming to defend.

Weeks after the run on home-storing duct tape, preparations took on much more serious overtones. In Israel and Kuwait—no friends of Saddam Hussein—anti-missile batteries the size of small buildings were wheeled into community courtyards to guard against incoming rockets. Kuwaiti oilfield workers and emergency personnel practiced for mock chemical attacks. In northern Iraq, Kurdish shepherds moved

their flocks to safer grounds.

Elsewhere, preparations were a full-blown exercise. London authorities laid plans for a trial evacuation of the Tube and the British press reported that fortified bunkers had been prepared for Tony Blair and his cabinet. In the U.S., security officials sketched out airport flight paths, assessing their vulnerability to terrorists with shoulder-launching missiles. Western nations will spend a total of US\$859 billion in 2003 on domestic security, a consulting firm reported.

Welcome to a world where trigger fingers ached. Long-running rebel disputes in Colombia and the Philippines erupted, and the U.S. moved 24 bombers to its old Second World War base in Guam to be within doser-striding distance of North Korea. This followed weeks of increasingly belligerent rhetoric from Pyongyang, and an incident last week when North Korean fighter jets "locked" radar on a U.S. surveillance plane—testing the water limits of diplomacy.

Police in Kuwait City stage a mock chemical warfare attack, a young protester holds a candle for the peace in Paris.



**Quote of the week** | 'We cannot be a bully in the world's schoolyard and expect co-operation, friendship and support from the rest of the world'

Massachusetts Senator EDWARD KENNEDY



**REPRISAL**

A suicide bomber killed 15 people, mostly students, and injured 50 others on a crowded bus in the northern Israeli town of Hadera. It was the first suicide-bomb attack in Israel since Jan. 5 and followed a two-week Israeli offensive in the Gaza Strip targeting senior Hamas organizers. A day later, Israeli tanks and helicopters, taking the streets of a Gaza refugee camp with machine guns, killed 13 Palestinians and wounded nearly 140 others in retaliation.

**WORLD**

**CAPTURES** He was asleep when U.S. and Pakistani special agents broke into his Rawalpindi hideout. Now he is in chains, likely blindfolded and deep-deprived, somewhere in that no man's land between interrogation and torture. The surprise capture of al-Qaeda's 37-year-old military planner Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the bearded as he himself boasted last fall—he had the Sept. 11 attack on the U.S. provided a huge lift to the anti-terror campaign. More substance of the treasure trove of al-Qaeda secrets that came with the capture: computer data, cellphones and documents that possibly hint at future plots, as well as evidence that bin Laden's Qaeda bin Laden was alive as recently as February. Mohammed is the third powerful al-Qaeda leader now in custody, along with Abu Zubaydah and Sept. 11 coordinator Ramzi bin al-Shibh, all captured in Pakistan.



**FLOODING** Two Arab League summit meetings designed to forge a common position on the Iraq crisis degenerated into name-calling as ancient rivalries rose to the surface. In Egypt, Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah called Libya's Muammar Gaddafi a liar and stormed out of a meeting after Gaddafi accused the Saudis of hiding behind U.S. skin in the 1991 Gulf War. Later in Qatar, Kuwait and Iraqi officials called each other monkeys, raincoats, infidels and charlatans.

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**TURKISH** A powerful bounty hidden in a backpack killed 23 and wounded at least 145 others at a crowded airport in the southern Philippines. An Islamist group with links to al-Qaeda claimed responsibility for the attack. But the Philippine military blamed it on another rebel group that has been fighting for a separate Islamic homeland in the predominantly Catholic country for 30 years.

In gang-infested Colombia, a bomb killed seven at a shopping center in the northeastern town of Cucuta, one of a series of recent attacks by leftist rebels designed to take their long-running battle to the cities.

**U.S./IRAN** Arch-rivals Ben Fein and the U.S. Uzbekistan walked away without agreement from nearly three days of high-level talks to restore local government to Northern Ireland. British Prime Minister Tony Blair delayed planned elections until May 29 to allow the sides to deal with what's on the table.

An earlier experiment in power-sharing among Catholics and Protestant politicians fell apart in October over accusations the militant IRA was refusing to destroy its weaponry—which is still an outstanding issue.

**SPORT** Seventy-three countries and 65 sports federations have agreed, at least in principle, to the World Anti-Doping Agency's first uniform code for combating drug use in sports, designed to be in place for the 2004 Olympics. Two sports teams in the U.S. are not covered by the code, although NBA players selected to Olympic teams will now be subject to spot tests. Also, soccer's governing body, FIFA, is keeping the right to set its own suspension rules.

**JUSTICE** The U.S. Supreme Court upheld the long sentence handed out under California's three-time-offender law, ruling that a prison term of 25 years to life is not cruel and unusual punishment in the case of a small-time thief who stole a golf club on his third offense.

**SOVIETOLOGY** A joint study by Russian and American historians concludes that Soviet despot Joseph Stalin was severely murdered with rare poison 50 years ago because understanding framed he was about to launch a nuclear

# Fantasy.

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attack on the U.S. and another mass murder campaign of his own associates.

## CANADA

**DESTROYER HMCS** Troopies acted again for the Persian Gulf, where it is to be the flagship of an intermittent naval group but without a helicopter of its own. The destroyer returned to its Halifax dock for three days of repairs after a 49-year-old Sea King crashed on its fuselage. Canadian officials say the accident-prone Sea King can perfectly safe choppers, but they couldn't screw up a spare one to outfit the Troopies.

**POLITICS** Former finance minister Paul Martin handed over the \$37,500 deposit required for a Liberal leadership run, and his successor, John Manley, was planning the same. Both put off formal announcements until later this month.

Opposition critics want Immigration Minister Denis Cochrane for "repeatedly" misleading Parliament about the much larger than expected number of immigrants who will be affected by retroactive rule changes. The calls came after Cochrane claimed that an adverse ruling by Federal Court Judge Michael Helen was merely a draft decision, something the judge took the unusual step of correcting publicly.

**COMMENTARIES** Five Canadian cities—Saskatoon, Moose, Brandon and Rensselaer, Ont., along with Calgary and Fort McMurray,



Alta.—made the list of the safest places in the world, according to the World Health Organization. A UN environmental agency also reported that Canada has the second-best water quality in the world, after Finland.

**HORSE KILLERS** Four 17-year-olds from northeast Alberta have been charged with the drive-by killings of three horses in the Bonnyville area. RCMP are still hunting for other horse killers along a stretch of highway north of Edmonton.

**RATES** With inflation creeping up, the Bank of Canada aimed to control lending rate a quarter of a per cent, setting off a flurry of related increases in other interest and mortgage rates, and in the Canadian dollar. The U.S. imposed a 3.94-per-cent tariff

**LIFELONG PASSION** She started her collection of objects nobody wanted almost 30 years ago with a milk glass shaver like a rooster. Over the years, Mabel Covey Sharpe's quest for a consuming passion for Quebec's funky folk art sparked a craze—and crammed her modest St. Lambert home, on Montreal's south shore, with offbeat sculptures, seashell-ware, whittings and hand-carved religious artifacts, some dating back close to three centuries. Now, the 420-item oddball collection assembled by Sharpe, who died last year at 94, is going to the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau, Que., as what the institution calls "one of the most substantial gifts ever made to a Canadian museum."

on Canadian wheat, angering its own firms, who warned within the 14-to 25 per cent range, and Canadians, who cried hypocrisy, claiming the U.S. has among the world's most heavily subsidized farm economies.

**SAFETY** One in three Ontario teenagers say they have been passengers in a car with an intoxicated driver, a study of teenage alcohol use found. The trend increased with age, as 43 per cent of Grade 13 students reported the experience.

## HEALTH

**SURGERY** Surgeons at St. Joseph's Hospital in Hamilton performed one of the world's first long-distance operations, separating stomach disorders on two patients in North Bay, 400 km away, using a computer-assisted remote team. From the Hamilton control board, laparoscopic pioneer Dr. Nathan Aronson carried out the procedure by manipulating robotic probes in North Bay over data-quality phone lines. St. Joseph's intends to set up other Zoon assistants in Yellowknife and Chicomilco, Que.

**FINDINGS** Some forms of mild hyperactivity and attention deficit problems in children may be sleep-related and can be cured without medication, researchers said.

An Aspirin a day can stave off colon and rectal polyps, often a precursor to cancer, a series of studies found.

Only 24 per cent of medical students chose family medicine for residency training this year, a drop-off that will only add to the existing shortages of family doctors, the Canadian Medical Association said.



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BY GEOFF OLSON



## Mansbridge on the Record



## WEAPONS THAT WORK

The U.S., like Canada, still uses old equipment—but with a key difference

**THE MOST POWERFUL** fighting force in the world is ready to be unleashed by its politicos and master. But for all the sophisticated and highest-tech weaponry that the United States can boast, some of the main pillars supporting its military arsenal are decades old.

Let's start with the U-2 spy plane, which has been photographing all of Iraq's known strategic installations. It's a crucial tool of military planners—and has been in selected occasions since the late 1950s, when it was first put into action for the Cold War. Remember Francis Gary Powers, the U-2 pilot who had to land during a spying mission over the Soviet Union in 1960? He was captured and spent 21 months in a Soviet prison. And how about the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962? Those famous pictures of the Soviet missiles aimed at the U.S. came from a U-2.

Then there's the eight-engine B-52 bomber, which can launch cruise missiles and conventional bombs, as it flies high above the clouds—which it's been doing since 1954. The last B-52 came off the assembly line in 1962, but the Pentagon proudly states that the big bombers will be in mainstay at least until 2045. There are other examples of technology lasting well past its apparent due date—and here's a particularly striking one. Since the 1960s, the aircraft used by the U.S. commander in chief (president, of course, the President) for quick exits from the White House has been the Sikorsky VH-3D helicopter. The Americans call it Marine One on this side of the border; we call the same piece of machinery a Sea King.

Which brings us to the sorry image of that crumpled Sea King on the deck of HMCS Iroquois and limp back into Halifax harbor recently. That picture seemed to sum up how little of people feel about the current state of the Canadian Forces' out of date and ill-equipped to fulfill its constantly changing mandate.

The exact details of what happened that morning in the Atlantic are still pending from

an investigation, but some things can be pieced together. This was no gentle eight-seater; rather, it was the beginning of a mission already hampered by severe high winds. Less than 10 m off the deck of the Iroquois, one of the helicopter's engines apparently failed. At this stage of flight, the pilots have less time than it takes you to read this sentence to make the decisions that will save their machine and its crew.

These pilots did both by some how dropping the Sea King back onto the flight deck, instead of into the raging sea alongside. In another country, they would be heroes. In Canada, we link their story to the long, bitter debate over the age and seaworthiness of the machines they fly. There is a problem with Canada's Sea King force—the fact that there wasn't a replacement for the damaged one when Iroquois returned to mission is proof of that. And Ottawa seems to now admit that we're beyond the point of updating them with modern technology as the Americans have done with Marine One, the U-2s and the B-52s; a replacement should finally be available by the end of this decade.

Meanwhile, Canada's pilots, the men and women who have always been the pointed end of this country's capabilities, continue to do their job. I have some real understanding of the skills required when I was barely out of high school. I joined the navy because I wanted to be a pilot. I went through training in British Columbia, Ontario and Manitoba. It was tough, demanding excellence and extraordinary dedication. I lasted about a year, as it turned out, I wasn't good enough. If I had been, I would have almost certainly been sent to fly one of what was then a fairly new addition to the force's destroyer fleet—the Sea King. Now, 36 years later, I'm reminded again how challenging that would have been.

Peter Mansbridge is Chief Correspondent of CBC Television. He's also author of *The National* to comment letters@mansbridge.ca

## Passages

**DED** Charles Reeper came to Canada in 1915, an orphan from Scotland. Not yet 18, he fought at Vimy Ridge and later at the Third Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele). After the First World War, Reeper returned to Winnipeg and worked for the city transit



department. He was the inspiring Vimy infantry veteran. (A bill is now before the Senate to make April 9 "Vimy Ridge Day" in Canada.) Reeper, 103, died of complications from a stroke.

**DED** RCMP Cpl. Robert McDowell was part of the team that caught the "mad trapper of Rat River." On Dec. 31, 1931, McDowell and his partner, Alfred King, arrived, after a 130-km dog-sled trip from Adelaide, N.W.T., at the Arctic house of Albert Johnson, a trapper who'd allegedly been terrorizing a band of nearby natives. After being fired upon, McDowell dragged his injured partner back to the dog-sled and fled. On Feb. 17, 1932, after a two-month cat-and-mouse game with the RCMP, Johnson was found and killed in the Yukon. McDowell, 94, the only officer involved in the case from start to finish, died in a nursing home in Oliver, B.C.

**CHRONICLED** Long-time national sweet-tooth Dave Johnson will keep his job but will be formally sanctioned by Swimming Canada for critical concerns he made regarding Jennifer Cannell, who won the Quebec flag at the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester, England. An independent panel recommended that Johnson's power be diluted and that he be replaced when an opportunity arises.

**AWARDED** Fred Bodsworth is this year's recipient of the \$20,000 "Women's Trust of Canada Man Cohen Award." The Port Huron, Ont., native, who was a writer at Macdon's from 1947 to 1953, has penned six books, including *Last of the Cowboys* (1953). Bodsworth, 85, is working on a non-fiction book about the environment.

**DED** Sir Hardy Amies was the official dressmaker to Queen Elizabeth II for 28 years. Amies, 93, died of a heart attack in his sleep in Langford, England.

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### THEWEEK

#### Diplomacy | 'No urgency'

France has emerged as a leading voice for a diplomatic solution to the Iraq crisis, arguing that UN inspectors are working and that weapons inspectors should be given more time to hunt for banned chemical and biological arms. This position, shared by Russia and Germany, has drawn the ire of Washington and led to accusations France is weakening the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Last week, Philippe Gualfry, the French ambassador to Canada, discussed his country's position with Ottawa Correspondent Julian Richman.

**What is France's view of Canada's compromise proposal giving Iraq until the end of March to comply with demands to disarm, or else?**

We welcome that Canada is trying to find a solution to avoid war. But we don't need an ultimatum. We already have a kind of ongoing ultimatum. Under United Nations Security Council resolution 1441, inspectors have to come back regularly and report. If the inspectors say, "We cannot go on this way, the Iraqis are not co-operating," even the French will draw the conclusion and move to other avenues, including the possibility of force. So in a way, the pressure on Iraq is constant. But we agree that we need an agenda, a schedule with pre-identified targets for Iraq to meet.

**What if at some point UN chief inspector Hans Blix issues a damning report?**

In that case, and that case only, the Security Council will have to decide what to do next. We never excluded military action, certainly not, because we are not in disagreement with the U.S. on the fundamental—the fight against terrorism, the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. What we don't agree with is unilateral action, and secondly, America's apparent desire to overthrow the regime. Because if the U.S. goes to war on such little provocation, who is next? Iraq is not the only country trying to acquire weapons of mass destruction.

**Has the U.S. convinced France that Saddam Hussein is hiding weapons of mass destruction, or is linked to al-Qaeda?**

No. We know that the Iraq regime is not close to al-Qaeda movement. And for the time being, it's clear that has not discovered any



dangerous enough to justify force. Certainly not. We have to wait one month, like Canada proposes, or two months, or three months, that's not unreasonable when the alternative is crushing a country and killing people. There is no urgency.

**You cannot expect the U.S. to keep 200,000 soldiers in the region indefinitely.**

That's not a reason [to go to war]. Imagine if one country in the future threatens another and says, "My troops are on the border. I would like to use them." We have to recognize that the U.S. military threat has already had positive effects on the Iraqi government, so in a way, they have already fulfilled one objective, which was to ensure Iraq is not a threat. You don't need to have young American soldiers die for the cause, if you've already achieved the result.

**Americans are saying that they rescued France in two world wars, but now that America needs France, it is not there.**

So because the U.S., or Canada, sent troops

in free Europe—not just France—we have to accept any U.S. or Canadian idea without discussion? We have an alliance, and that means we discuss together and decide together. We have had experience with unilateralism, and it wasn't good. It's because we lost so many men and because Europe was half destroyed that we so strongly trust the mutual-aid system. We learned the value of discussion, multilateralism, and finding peaceful solutions if possible. That's not a sign of weakness, it's a sign of wisdom. But if it were necessary to resort to force, we would absolutely be ready to do so.

**Is the future of NATO jeopardized by the response over Iraq?**

Definitely not. We are not concerned about a potential weakening of the transatlantic link. Politically, historically, economically, we have too much in common. We have a disagreement on methodology, but in the fight against terrorism, there is no disagreement.

# WAR—AT ANY COST?

Washington doesn't really want to give diplomacy a second chance, writes ARTHUR KENT

**THE CHASM WIDENED** last week. As France, Germany and Russia threatened to veto any United Nations resolution authorizing the use of force against Iraq, Washington vowed to go ahead with military action—with or without Security Council approval. Against that unopposed backdrop, Canadian diplomats soldiered on, pushing Ottawa's compromise proposal for allowing Iraq more time to comply with UN demands to disarm. For a man who's been losing sleep and running hard, Paul Hainbecker appeared to be relishing the day ahead. "First I'll look in on the Mexicans and the French and the Russians," Canada's ambassador to the UN said, "and find out what they're thinking is today."

Hainbecker has been attempting to revive the diplomatic marketplace with the prospect of that somewhat discounted ideal peace. In this hotbed of global push, persuasion and posturing, the Clinton government's proposal, that Iraq be given until March 26 or 31, was indeed "not getting traction," in diplomatic speak. Yet Hainbecker showed not a trace of discouragement. "The plan hasn't really failed," he said, "and our best hope is that when peo-

ple come to the edge of the abyss, they'll decide they'd rather find another way."

That other way would unite the Security Council midway between what appears to be the George W. Bush's plan for an invasion as soon as possible, and the insistence of France and others that UN weapons inspectors should have much more time to try to peacefully disarm Saddam Hussein. The primary goal to prevent a worsening of the already disastrous split in the council, should the U.S. and Britain try to push through a potentially divisive second resolution authorizing war—which may happen this week. "Our idea is not rocket science," Hainbecker said, "but we did think of them first, and with our timing, we caught a wave of interest. On one hand, our document allows the possibility of a war, but there's also a decision to be made first: a judgment on Iraq's co-operation in disarmament, and a deadline for authorizing the use of force."

But the Bush administration has bluntly dismissed Ottawa's proposal. Then again, the Bush administration is discussing almost anything that might lead in the way of war—including an assertion last week by chief UN weapons inspector Hans Blix that Sad-

dam's regime appears to be showing signs of "real disarmament." Blix later repeated that message when he reported to the Security Council on Friday, although he also stated that Iraq still needs to be more forthcoming. But Bush had effectively given his answer the night before, in a televised speech that seemed intended to preface the U.S. for war. Iraq has failed to disarm, the President said—"when it comes to our security, we don't need anybody's permission. This is the last phase of diplomacy."

With the U.S. lobbying intensely for the support of the 15-vote permanent members of the council, the debate around the UN is final. There have been reports of spying on swing-vote UN missions by the U.S. National Security Agency as it seeks further advantage for the Bush administration and its diplomatic overtures. Chile has demanded an investigation. Meanwhile, the U.S. last week expelled two spokesmen from Iraq's UN mission, claiming as the same time that a total of 300 Iraqi soldiers are diplomats at embassies around the world are intelligence operations plotting against U.S. interests.

The cold New York rules, meanwhile, seemed to ignore and minimize as the U.S. ad-

ministration's insistence on military action without delay. "Why do so many Americans support the Bush plan, and why are they angered by other nations' protest?" asked one Canadian diplomat. "It's mainly because Bush managed to link the Iraq issue to counterterrorism, and the American public is keen by suggestion the world doesn't want to support the U.S. against terror." A colleague added, "There are voices within the current administration who don't see

any purpose in the UN. They believe this is the 'American Historical Moment' and that the U.S. shouldn't be tangled up by the UN." Foreign diplomats are not alone in expressing anxiety over the Bush administration's bullish disregard for other nations' reluctance to go to war. Prominent U.S. statesman also worry that Bush is steering recklessly into a mine of blind alleys. "This is a difficult style of leadership, and if it continues we're going to see sections that won't be good for the U.S.," says Lee Hamilton, president of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Wash-

ington. "The Bush administration is not alone in expressing anxiety over the Bush administration's bullish disregard for other nations' reluctance to go to war. Prominent U.S. statesman also worry that Bush is steering recklessly into a mine of blind alleys. "This is a difficult style of leadership, and if it continues we're going to see sections that won't be good for the U.S.," says Lee Hamilton, president of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Wash-



American troops on desert maneuvers in Kuwait, only 35 km from the Iraqi border

ington. "We've seen these reactions already in election results from Brazil to South Korea to Germany. Around the world, there's a lot of resentment. This president's policies are blunt, his rhetoric is as divisive. There's a lack of patience in the Bush administration—they've made up their minds to give it another couple of weeks, but they really don't want to give diplomacy a second chance."

Hamilton is a former influential, centrist Democrat congressman. As head of the Wilson Center, he speaks for the institutional conscience of American diplomacy; the institution was set up to foster in name-takes-president's quest for effective, consensus-building international relations, and it receives significant annual funding from the U.S. government. In "Web site features an essay by Hamilton that includes this stark warning: "A desperate Saddam Hussein could use a scorched-earth policy that includes attacks on Israel, the Kurds and other internal opposition. The worst-case scenario is that he is able to use chemical and biological weapons to inflict severe casualties on civilians or U.S. troops. The Iraqi army may also be positioned in heavily populated areas, inviting civilian casualties from U.S. strikes. The American people have not been prepared for the possibility of substantial U.S. casualties or civilian deaths in a war that may involve chemical and biological weaponry."

Hamilton told *Maclean's*: "The President is less concerned about the sensitivities his policies are creating than other presidents. This group in the White House is very confident about American power, that it's good for the world as well as their own interests. The main consequence is that you're probably creating a lot of Osama bin Ladenes. The long-term consequences of power used unilaterally are hard to measure, but what happened in Turkey [the refusal to allow 60,000 U.S. troops into the country for a northern attack on Iraq] is not surprising. Allies and friends may not be as willing to step forward and co-operate with us in future."

Not so, the administration claimed last week. For proof of its decency in maintaining co-operation abroad, the White House pointed gleefully to the arrest in Pakistan of al-Qaeda kingpin Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, together with money handler Mustafa Ahmed al-Hawsari. But by mid-week, it's official U.S.



Hamilton says that at the edge of the abyss, people will search for another way

line that the arrests were the result of a joint U.S.-Pakistan intelligence operation was being assessed by analysts in both countries, and a spokesperson for the various police and intelligence agencies who shared a share of credit for this rare counter-terrorist coup.

Maclean's interviewed a senior source in Pakistan that at one point during the matter of claims and counterclaims. Pakistani officials considered releasing a formal rebuttal of Washington's assertion that American case officers had been key to the operation. The Pakistani version of events is backed up by at least one well-placed observer within Washington's intelligence community. "It's pretty disgusting, really, because the truth is that this was a Pakistani operation through and through, really basic guerilla stuff," the source told Maclean's. "It wasn't about sophisticated spying stuff. They just tracked Shabbir Muhammad down. They just took old fashioned police work. The FBI in Pakistan had a minor role, but these claims that it's a major victory for U.S. co-operation don't really give a true picture at home in the States. All this chatter bearing dramatic attention from the fact that we just don't have enough investigative manpower and resources on the ground over there. The FBI and the CIA and the White House should stop spinning reality and start putting more brains and muscle into the field."

The charge that U.S. spies are not getting the support they require is hardly debased in

Washington, but there's little argument over one irritating—and threatening—statistic: two-thirds of al-Qaeda's leadership remains at large. Should terrorist cells strike at U.S. and other western targets during combat operations in Iraq, the White House will be bombarded with still more accusations that it has gone too long on attacking Saddam and far too short on counterterrorism.

One foreign policy consultant to the U.S. military, who spoke to Maclean's on condition of anonymity, said, "It's undeniable, I'm afraid, that this administration has lost focus. The President and his people have lost every dollar of their political capital on getting a perfect outcome in Iraq—disarmament, regime change, spreading of democracy, the works. It'll be more like a miracle. The truth is that once the military gets beyond the brass bluster, if you can't be successful in Afghanistan, I can't imagine we're going to be successful in Iraq."

So the drumbeat grows deafening, and public opinion in the U.S., though wavering, continues to provide little with a workable edge over its critics. The foreign policy consultant offers an explanation. "The country's coming out of shock over 9/11, but the anger's still there," he says. "People really don't want to hear about allies failing the war plan down. They want a result, a tangible end result. Right now we feel we're going, looking for out in Iraq."



## THE DANGEROUS ROAD SOUTH

The way from Baghdad to Kuwait features bandits, desolation—and oil

**THE ROAD SOUTH** from Baghdad is hot, dry, dusty and dangerous. "You see those partitions along the side of the road?" an Iraqi official says. "They are there for protection. Soldiers patrol in cars along the road. At night it is dangerous. There are bandits. They stop cars and rob them. They live over there." Over "there" are the wastelands, where many of the Marsh Arabs have been forcibly relocated. They are tribes that for centuries lived autonomously in the marshes south of Basra, Iraq's second city. Then came the Iran-Iraq war. As it dragged on in the 1980s and the army's death count rose, Saddam Hussein's regime demanded that the Marsh Arabs submit their young men for military service.

They resisted. Resistance became a low-grade guerrilla rebellion against government troops, and the small rebellion be-

came one result in the wake of the 1991 Gulf War. Saddam's regime retaliated with massive force—helicopter gunships and artillery. The Marsh Arabs were rounded up and removed, and the marshes were drained. Now, deprived of their homeland and means of subsistence—fishing and harvesting reeds for papermaking—they've become labor day highlanders.

Along the road are newly dug trenches. From time to time we glimpse a camouflaged tank. We see two militia groups of men marching beside the road, holding rifles, their leaders carrying camouflaged and white flags. They're local residents, being trained to fight off an invasion.

Along the city of Amara, the oil literally bubbles up out of the ground in places that Amara is poor, the money from oil goes into other pockets. Small smokestacks rise up from the desolate landscape, oily black ribbons of smoke pouring out of them, staining the sky. The smoke comes from brick kilns, which use easily available crude oil as fuel. "The locals call the kilns their 'communist factories.'"

At Basra see the men of metal. Along the riverfront, 40 bronze statues point toward Iraq at the base of each is a plaque reading, "This statue has been erected by order of the victorious Saddam Hussein." The figures are officers—martyrs in Saddam's war with Iran. Each statue is larger than life, but a foot taller than all the rest is the likeness of Iraq's former defence



minister, Adnan Khairallah. He was killed a year after the war ended, in a helicopter crash. It wasn't an accident, Saddam's son-in-law, whom he defected in 1996, revealed that, after a personal feud, Saddam or hired explosives placed around the heli-copter so blow it up in mid-flight. Sadly dead, Khairallah was transformed into the lead martyr of Baas.

Then in the second round I have seen Baas. The first was in 1983, a year before the war with Iran ended. Then I saw it from across the Shatt al-Arab river, standing on the desert front line. The Iranians took a group of foreign reporters to the front after a huge offensive. We drove through a landscape of desert and pools marked by mortar and artillery shells. The Iraqis were lobbing them as we arrived. Young Iranian volunteers, the Ba'ath, waved and grinned as we passed, seemingly oblivious to the shelling. In the offensive the Iranians had taken half a kilo meter of territory, but the offensive had failed, the goal had been to take Baas. We were told that 20,000 Iranians died trying.

Four years later, just after the Gulf War, Baas rose again against Saddam. The toll was terrible. The regime re-established its au-

A massive desert junkyard is filled with the debris left by American attacks in 2003

thority with tanks, troops and aircraft. Three sands were killed. To this day, Baas is patrolled by "Jihadist Soldiers"—squads loyal to the leader because the leader does not trust the city. If there was an invasion now, how long would the city hold out? About five months, one man estimated. There is no way to judge the accuracy of this prediction, but what is surprising south of Baas is the seeming lack of military preparedness—a small camp here, a dug-in tank there.

There are checkpoints all along the road to the south. We are usually waved through. At one checkpoint we have to wait—soldiers and officials are checking passengers on a list ahead of us. Someone later whispers they were looking for army deserters. There are also what appear to be hangouts without lights. Clear inspection reveals them to be tank barns' planted upright in plants of cactus, pointing to the sky. On the ground beside each one stands a used motorcycle—mishandled mementos to the war with Iran.

The devastation of that war is still evident by the side of the road. Stretching for kilo-

meters are the blasted remains of date palm trees. Once these plantations produced dates for export, once the palms stood above the now almost nonexistent and vegetable gardens. Today it is a landscape of desolation. The Iraqis captured the palms in 1986. To stop a counteroffensive, they flooded it with seawater. Then both sides shelled it mercilessly. It has yet to recover.

Finally the border. To get to it we drive along the so-called "highway of death." On this stretch of road, thousands of scattered Iraq troops were killed and their cars and vehicles ripped to pieces by the firepower of advancing American forces in 1991. The Iraqis hoarded the wreckage of that disaster to a massive desert junkyard not far from the highway. A few kilometers further south a sign written in Arabic and English in paint, new graffiti. It says, "Saddam Hussein identifying the Arab people in the month of truth and liberation." The sign stands at the edge of the desert landscape between Iraq and Kuwait, patrolled now as it has been for 12 years by 200 UN observers in white vans marked by blue UN flags.

In the flat universe of its southern desert, Iraq has much, just seven. It stands 153 m-

high. Once it was a hiding place for smugglers. Now, rising up just outside the de-facto no-fly zone, it is the country's early warning system, an outpost from which to spy on the great army assembling less than 10 km to the south. The outpost houses a dozen soldiers. From the roof of their modern one-story building, they stand and stare through powerful binoculars at the growing American army. The men of this forward unit have no running water or electricity. They do have a dorekay.

Their commander is Lt-Col. Hassan. He's been standing on this hill for five years. He's a tall man who, about to go on leave to Baghdad, smiles happily. Of course you can see the buildup, he says. The Americans now are no more than six kilometers away. As he talks, we hear their jets roaring through the sky. A helicopter patrols back and forth across the territory the Americans now sit. Lt-Col. Hassan estimates their numbers in his sector increased by more than 20 per cent (less than a month). You can hear their firing on munitions at night, he says.

The small, dusty city of Umm Qasr is jammed up against the de-facto no-fly zone. Some of

Iranians once produced dates for export, but that was before the Iran-Iraq war

no roads to live in houses now inside the zone itself. Their children play behind the barbed wire they've known all their lives, in sight of a long, bridge-like building being built by the UN. This, Iraq officials tell us, will be a UN refugee shelter if war rages over the city.

In a local market, we could be a year or 10 away for all that the sleepy routine has changed. No one refuses to talk to us. No one offers anything but the official line when asked if they fear another conflict. We're used to this, a local welder says—the Americans have been attacking us for a dozen years. It's become normal. The attacks he refers to are bombing raids by American and British planes in the so-called southern

no-fly zone, imposed after the Gulf War. There have been scores of those in the last few months against Iraqi aerial defense, radar and missile positions.

In recent weeks the Americans have also targeted the south with leaflets. Each person interviewed denies any knowledge of them or where from the community knows that later, quietly, one man says that in fact, everyone knows of the leaflets. They have been dropped on local military bases, and Iraqi soldiers are to resist an American invasion. People have been afraid to talk to us, he says, because they think we are UN inspectors.

For now, the south wars with its glittering prizes. We see them along the road and on the horizon—oil fields and petrochemical complexes. Their flames burn attached to the maddening desert sun. There are reports that Saddam Hussein is ready to torch his wealth as he did the Kuwaiti fields a dozen years ago. When we pass, however, sheep graze, watched by child shepherds, in fields next to the petrochemical beacons. The flames are tame.

Ken Murray is the senior European correspondent on BBC's The World



**On the eve of war, the south of Iraq waits with its glittering prizes: Saddam Hussein's petrochemical complexes**



Wayesa and her husband, Bedasse (top left and right), rely on food aid and what little week they can find, but fear their baby may not live; to survive in the drought-stricken areas, thousands of farmers like them (above) have been forced to sell off their livestock.



With the village's water supply drying up, children are growing weaker by the day.

## 'SO LITTLE TO EAT'

More than 11 million are facing starvation

**THE TINY PLOT** of land Jorjho Bedasso farmed in Ethiopia's Rift Valley produced enough grain to feed his family of five, but it never made him much money. So when a vicious drought took hold of his country last year, he had little to fall back on. "I have only 56 birr [\$16] left in this pocket," said Bedasso, gesturing at the tattered gray pants (that hold his life savings). Like a growing number of farmers, he has been forced to abandon his parched fields and survive by doing manual labor: smashing bottles into building blocks and lugging bags of cement—all carried out under a relentless sun for pennies a day. As Bedasso reined under the shade of a thorn tree, he shared his worries about his nine-month-old son, Gans. "He's becoming thinner and thinner," Bedasso told *Macleans*, his greying head falling to hide his own hollow cheeks. "We have so little to eat."

During the wet season of July to October, almost no rain fell across nearly one-third of Ethiopia, from the northern border with Eritrea to the southern border with Kenya. Villages, like those around Bedasso's farm, 125 km south of the capital, Addis Ababa, are starving in dust. The soil has dried into clumps so hard they look like stones, and deep muddy water is all that remains in ponds built to conserve runoff. Nearly 90 per cent of crops have been lost in some areas, and 11 million people (nearly a third of Ethiopia's population) will need food aid this year. Sam Vander Ende of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, a Winnipeg-based aid agency that distributes grain, has lived in Ethiopia for nine years, but says, "I've never seen anything of the magnitude of what we're confronted with today."

The crisis is potentially worse than the 1984-85 famine in which one million people died. While the length of the current drought has not been as long as it was in the 1980s, farmers ground down by years of poverty no longer have the resources to survive even a short dry spell. To prevent widespread starvation, the UN and donor nations have launched a massive effort to dis-

tribute as much as 1.4 million tonnes of food this year. (Canada has agreed to spend \$47 million to help finance the program.)

Yet food aid alone won't solve Ethiopia's chronic hunger problem. Nearly five million Ethiopians need food relief even in years of good harvest. And Prime Minister Meles Zenawi has been criticized for doing little to boost food production during his decade in power, and for having waged a costly war with Ethiopia's northern neighbour Eritrea over a disputed boundary. "The government emphasizes that it's a poor country," says Vander Ende. "But they were a poor country that could afford to fight a war."

The money used to finance the war could have been spent modernizing the agricultural sector. The Blue Nile flows through the country, but less than five per cent of arable land is irrigated and 85 per cent of Ethiopia's population live as subsistence farmers. "This country could be the breadbasket of Africa," says Don Proke, a Canadian agricultural researcher based in Ethiopia.

Instead, people are migrating to towns in search of water, work and aid. Animals are dying or being sold. "I have one on and I am going to sell it at the market," declares Abdisalam Daw, his second hand, rasping on a wooden stick. "But before he sets out, a local official tells Don he'll be lucky to get \$80 for his ox—less than half of what it would have fetched a year ago. "I would prefer to sell it for 1,000 birr [\$244]," says Don. "But nobody will give it."

Selling livestock is no longer an option for Bedasso—his animals perished in the drought. His wife, Hailu Wayesa, leans against the wall of a mud hut, holding Gans. Mother and son both have raggy chest coughs, and the shyly lowering eyes tell of fever. Embellished with the wood Tigrak and Leonardo DiCaprio's fading image. "Since I don't eat much food," she says, "I don't have much breast milk." Gans, dressed only in a tattered sweater, cries after a few seconds of futile nursing. He receives a nipple and a lullaby that his stomach—like those of millions of Ethiopians—remains painfully empty. □



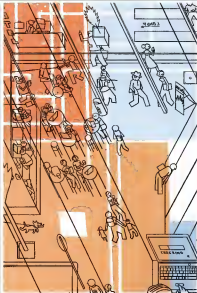
## THE WONDERS OF WI-FI

The Net without wires may be the Next Big Thing in tech. No, really.

**HOT CURRY POWDER.** That's the secret ingredient Matthew MacGillivray likes to add to his rice dishes—that or curries. He leans over the steaming pan and sniffs the aroma, then places it on his laptop computer—sitting right beside the stove. MacGillivray loves to cook, and the handiest place to find great recipes isn't the Net's many food sites. Six months ago, the 26-year-old software developer installed a wireless network that lets him surf the Net or access files stored on his desktop computer from anywhere in his second-story Toronto apartment. When the food's ready, he carries his plate, a glass of red wine and his laptop to the table, remotely retrieves some dinner music—MP3s from his PC—and then browses his favourite sites as he chews down. "I can't wait for summer," says MacGillivray. "I'm going to set up my hammock and eat while I surf."

The tech industry refers to people like MacGillivray as "early adopters," but the people it's really counting on to discover the wonders of Wireless Fidelity is the rest of us. If you haven't yet heard of Wi-Fi, it's just a matter of time. More and more consumers—just like businesses a year or so ago—are realizing how cheap and simple it is to connect all of their computers together and share files, pictures, Web cameras, music, movies and games. No more fussy fiddlers who get to use the computer with Internet access; no more burning stuff onto CDs to transfer information from one system to another; no more drilling holes in the floor to connect to the PC in the basement. With 20 per cent of Canadian homes already operating more than one computer—not to mention handheld devices—Wi-Fi is catching on fast. But not everyone realizes the unsavory side of the new technology: some wireless signals go through walls, an unsecured network is accessible to anyone driving down the street.

Wireless Fidelity isn't a brand or even a technology (and, no, there is no tech thing called wireless fidelity). A non-profit organization called the Wi-Fi Alliance oversees what products get the label. The current



standard wirelessly known as 802.11b, and works by allowing computers, including handhelds, to communicate with each other via radio waves transmitted from a base station, also called a router or access point. A user connects the base station to a high-

speed modem (sorry, Wi-Fi and dial-up don't mix) at home or the office and then attaches a second device to a laptop or PC. And it's fast. Data transfer speeds can reach 11 megabits per second—about 10 times as fast

continued on page 13



## Anticipating the next breakthrough in Prostate Cancer

Star Wars-style light sabre would not be out of place in the office of Dr. John Trachtenberg. As one of Canada's leading medical warriors in the fight against prostate cancer, the Toronto-based surgeon goes into battle wielding tiny rays of light and an Israeli desert plant. It sounds like science fiction but it's the cutting-edge reality of Canadian research into what is now the most commonly diagnosed cancer among men.

Once dismissed as "the disease your grandfather dies with but not from," prostate cancer has been unleashed as the second-biggest cancer killer of men in North America. That awareness has led to a flowering of medical exploration in labs and hospitals across the country, seeded in large part by money from the Prostate Cancer Research Foundation of Canada (PCRF). Last year the foundation approved \$850,000 to support current projects and it aims to distribute \$1.5 million in the next round. Prospects have never been better for earlier diagnosis and less-invasive treatment.



▲ Dr. Angharad Schreyer (left) and Dr. John Trachtenberg, after a recent successful operation at the Princess Margaret Hospital of Cancer Centre.

# Supporting Prostate Cancer Research in Canada

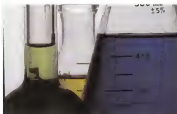
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This brings us to Toronto's Princess Margaret Hospital, where Dr. Trachtenberg wields his light saber. It is, in fact, a one-milliwatt laser beam. He injects it into the prostate of some patients, selectively illuminating portions of the walnut-sized gland in order to activate a photosensitive (light-activated) drug that literally chokes the life out of blood-thirsty tumours.

"The unique aspect of this plant-derived agent is that it targets the cells that line the blood vessels that go to the tumour," says Dr. Trachtenberg, describing the drug *Isotretinoin*, which was developed by Professor Jurgens



Schütz at Israel's Weizmann Institute. "In our early studies and animal models, it seems to leave normal tissue alone and preferentially damage the cancer tissue."

The best news so far is the lack of such withering side effects as impotence or incontinence, along with very preliminary indications that the treatment is effective. It has only been used since August 2002, and so far only as a last resort for patients who had undergone unsuccessful radiation treatment. But Dr. Trachtenberg can't contain his optimism.

"It's not that hard to envision a leap where, if you

resident became a doctor in the early '60s, Dr. Klotz would perform maybe one prostate removal a year. "Now residents frequently do that in a single day," he says. "The difference between the treatment being offered then and what we have now is night and day."

This is welcome news to the 20,000-plus Canadian men who will be diagnosed with prostate cancer this year. (As many as 4,500 others will die from it.) The most typical treatments—radiation, surgery or hormone therapy—carry side effects ranging from incontinence to impotence. These unpleasant considerations, along with the gland's location below the bladder and in front of the rectum, have been embarrassing enough to stifle frank discussion of the disease. But as more light is shed—and earlier testing brings earlier detection—existing treatments are being increasingly refined to limit those side effects.

About 90 per cent of those treated with surgery will have normal levels of continence once they've fully recovered, says Dr. Klotz. Cough hard on a full bladder and you may lose a drop of urine. But incontinence is really a life-altering concern for only about two per cent of patients.

Erections have roughly a 50 per cent chance of being affected by the radiation or surgery. But these odds are improving as new surgical techniques increasingly spare the vital nerves located near the prostate. At any rate, Dr. Klotz notes that many cases of treatment-induced impotence can be countered with drugs like Viagra and a new generation of injected erection-enhancers.

Further breakthroughs are underway as more researchers are attracted to prostate cancer by a wave of new funding. Breast cancer research had a 15-year head start, thanks to public awareness campaigns that galloped steam in the mid-'80s. "As of three years ago, there was 35 times as much federal funding going to breast cancer as prostate cancer, for a disease that affected the same number of patients and killed off the same number of people," says Dr. Klotz. "It didn't make sense. That is

It seems to leave normal tissue alone and damage preferentially the cancer tissue.

found early-stage disease in small volume, you'd selectively treat it with this drug, and the prostate would stay in there and maybe you'd need a tune-up every few years," he says.

That's in line with a fundamental shift in prostate treatment: "From seek and destroy to target and control," says Dr. Laurence Klotz, chief of urology at Sunnybrook & Women's College Health Sciences Centre in Toronto, specializing in genito-urinary cancers. When he was a senior

being corrected slowly, and the foundation has been a major part of that."

The Prostate Cancer Research Foundation of Canada currently supports 17 projects across the country. It acts as a sort of angel investor, spending six million annually to quickly determine if a medical hunch holds any promise. Researchers are equally drawn by the promise of a fairly untouchable field. "In breast cancer now, a trial often involves close to 20,000 patients, and you're looking for a

▼ Dr. Laurence Klotz, chief of urology at Sunnybrook & Women's College Health Sciences Centre in Toronto





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two- or three per cent difference in mortality," says Dr. Klotz. "Whereas with prostate cancer I think there's an opportunity to have a real bang for the buck."

Ideally, a concept that pans out will attract more substantial funding from a larger established body, like the Canadian Institutes for Health Research or the National Cancer Institute of Canada. That's what happened to Dr. Jenks Dodd of the University of Manitoba. His research into the fat receptors of prostate cells—and how they might be linked to progression of the disease—was vaulted onto the National Cancer Institute's grant list after

African ancestry. Black North Americans carry the highest risk of a prostate cancer diagnosis.

Such factors only serve to heighten Dr. Klotz's enthusiasm. He sees them as an abundance of clues. "There's lots of reasons to think that prostate cancer is highly preventable," he says, adding that current research is being complemented by the mapping of the human genome and by recent advances in molecular biology.

For example, prostate cancer doesn't appear naturally in many species besides humans, but thanks to the foundation-funded work of Dr. Jim Xuan at the London Health

In North America, about one in eight men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer.

exploratory funding from the Prostate Cancer Research Foundation helped prove she was on to something.

Dr. Dodd is exploring apparent dietary factors—how fat found in the so-called African diet may act differently on prostate cancer than our red meat-based diet, providing clues to slowing progress of the disease. Basically,

Scientists Centre in London, Ont., a colony of genetically engineered mice with prostate cancer has been developed with a prostate-specific gene. Moreover, Dr. Xuan has succeeded in utilizing a state-of-the-art technique (the knocking out gene technique)—a world first with a U.S. patent pending. This new mouse prostate cancer model mimics the human situation more closely and uniformly than ever before, and may become a new standard for testing the effectiveness of prostate cancer drugs in clinical trials in mice.

Dr. Dodd uses similarly altered mice to experiment on prostate fat receptors, while Dr. Klotz has successfully used the micronutrients Selenium and Vitamin E to combat tumours in his own set of prostate-probe rodents. However, their promising research has yet to be proven in long-range, randomized clinical trials, which are now underway. The same is true for the Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) blood test now used for diagnosis, as well as the preventive diet recommended by the PCRP—daily doses of lycopene, found in papayas and tomatoes, which is believed but not proven to slow the cancer's growth. But the experts at the top of this burgeoning medical field have no problem predicting what they preach—Dr. Klotz takes Vitamin E and Selenium—or anticipating the next breakthrough.

most men in the world will develop prostate disease if they live long enough: the proclinal cancer crises can begin to appear in a man's jays. For most (75 in an indolent or slow growing disease. It's fast growing, cancer that results in early death.

"In North America, about one in eight men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer," says Dr. Dodd. "In Asia, the rate is 50-fold lower." Such a marked difference suggests that diet and environment are factors, especially since the sons of Asian immigrants who settle in North America seem demonstrate a risk 10 times higher than that of their less-assimilated fathers. There also seems to be a genetic propensity for the disease among people of

The most exciting new projects are those aimed at finding molecular markers that would signal in advance who's susceptible to the lethal, fast-onset cancer, searching the genome to see if humans themselves have genetic markers that herald their arrival. Such a discovery would counter criticisms of overtreatment under the current PSA testing regime. More importantly, it would add significantly to the rapidly growing body of prostate cancer knowledge, "It's a very interesting time to be in this arena," says Dr. Trachtenberg. "Because I think that real progress will be made sooner rather than later." ■

## Who really cares about Geography any more?



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continued from page 26

as an average high-speed Internet connection. The effective range is usually limited to about 100 metres. But several access points connected to each other can build a web of public wireless "hot spots" that can conservatively cover an entire city, much like cell-phone coverage. In fact, that's a plan.

Wii's sales appeal has hardware developers working overtime to embed wireless technology in as just about everything coming off the assembly line. Already, some lovers can send MP3 tunes to special hard-disc-equipped car stereos via wireless car radios, and Wii DVD players can channel photos and videos from a computer to a TV. And that's just the start. By the end of this year, digital cameras, MP3 players, portable displays, tablet PCs and cellphones will be capable of using the new technology—and the list is growing. "In a few years, wireless will be everywhere," says Greg Barber, Microsoft Canada's director of home and entertainment products.

Major companies are jumping on the Wi-Fi wagon and investing billions, which they hope will lift the tech and telecom industries out of their doldrums. Sales of wireless smart and network cards nearly quadrupled in the U.S. last year and worldwide figures indicate a five-fold increase in unit sales by 2006, from six million today. No doubt

that's why giants Intel, AT&T and IBM formed a company called Corneta Networks Inc. in December and plan to blanket the 50 largest U.S. metropolitan areas with public wireless access points.

In Canada, things aren't nearly that ambitious—yet. Bell Canada has been running a pilot project offering free wireless access at 19 public places in Montreal, Toronto, Kingston and Calgary since December. Surfing online for a VIA train at Union Station in Toronto or on the Air Canada lounge at Montreal's Dorval airport can send mail or download some songs for their trip. Bell

trial ends this spring, and the company won't say where—or whether—the service will



The biggest Wi-Fi users are currently business types, so Wi-Fi goes where they go. Calgary's Fairmont Palliser hotel installed a wireless network mere months ago. "Our customers love it," says general manager Roger Soine. "We have a very nice lobby and a lot of people like to come down on the morning, sit at one of the desks and do some work, maybe have a meeting with a 'Calif-

shops are a popular destination, too. In the U.S., Starbucks Corp. has 2,300 outlets serving up Internet access to anyone willing to pay US\$3.6 a month to read their favourite e-zine while sipping a latte. Starbucks says it's interested in expanding the service to some of Canada's 300-plus locations.

Some businesses, though, are offering Wi-Fi for free, footing the bill in exchange for an increase in traffic. At Madriz, a trendy organic coffee shop with three locations in Toronto, people can surf and check e-mail, but the system blocks file-sharing to prevent would-be shop-downers from downloading music and movies on the coffee shop's dime. Installing the network has helped business, says operations manager Richard Chase. "We draw real-estate people, brokers, writers and high-

“We [also] has uses beyond business and pleasure. At the Marlboro Seaville hos-

**'War-driving'—cruising an area to find unprotected wireless networks—has drawn security concerns from Canada's spy agency.**

pital just north of Toronto, nurses wheel laptops through the well-lit halls and feed information into the hospital's electronic documentation system from beside a patient's bed. "Our investment improves patient care," says Scott Briggs, the hospital's IT director. In an emergency, doctors can access a patient's bedside chart—even see an X-ray or CT scan—from office or home.

Wireless is making a difference in the hinterland, too. Paul Eason moved to Kato, B.C., in the Kootenay Mountains in 1999 after 20 years working as a journalist in Hong Kong. Until recently, Eason, 33, had to make do with telephone. Internet access became no high-speed service was available. "I tried to be I'd did up to the World Wide Web," says Eason. Enter 24-year-old Simon Kerr, partner Sky Ziegler, 26, and their recent start-up, Mountainpeak Wireless. They use a series of towers linked to Nelson, B.C., 47 km away, to offer wireless access to 25 customers, with hopes of reaching 300 by the end of the year. Eason's happy. "I'm blown away by the service."

But while computers may not show the same performance, Wi-Fi has one big problem: security. Because wireless networks broadcast their signals over radio waves, anyone with a laptop or handheld can "sniff" networks using programs easily found on the Net and Bluetooth on someone else's connection. Not so user-conscious or business-critical they have to use special measures to defend such use. "Not enabling some kind of encryption," says J.P. Bregany, whose company Wireless Triadly advises businesses on security, "is like to looking up your computer on the Net and then leaving it on your front doorstep. A guy can sit outside if someone's house downloading porn for two weeks until the innocent guy's IP address gets shown up."

In fact, the high-tech hobby known as "war-driving"—crisscrossing a neighbourhood to find unprotected wireless networks—has drawn security concerns from Canada's spy agency, CSIS, and not without reason. After a half-hour tour through Toronto's business centre last month, Thurgay's handheld detected more than 130 unsecured networks.

Not that security is top of mind for Matt McGilvery. The food enthusiast is looking forward to spring so he can eat dinner on his front porch. He's only had Wi-Fi for six months, but can't imagine life without it. "It's addictive," he says. "It's freedom."





# THE PLUCK OF THE IRISH

The people are gone and the name's changed, but Griffintown lives on, writes SHARON DOYLE DRIEDGER

**HAPPY FURLONG'S LIFE** was saved by a queen of beer. When the elderly carriage driver left his evening house at the corner of Shamrock and Ottawa streets in Montreal's Griffintown shortly after 10 a.m., to buy his favourite ale at the local corner store, he had no idea that an RCMP officer was about to take off from a supply base in Dorval that 25-ton bomber, on a classified mission to Europe on that drizzly spring morning of April 25, 1944, would develop engine trouble as it approached Mount Royal. My uncle, Frank Doyle, then a 19-year-old student at St. Ann's Boys' School, ablock from Furlong's flat, remembers how the plane swooped over the school as the pilot made a desperate attempt to reach the shore. "We were panicking in after meals," he says. "We heard this big noise, zoom, a shock the place. Brother Edward, our teacher, said, 'Stay here and pray!'" God saved the school



The author (fifth from left) as a child on St. Patrick's Day, rowing at 1885

children. The plane missed the school and crashed into the block where Parking level Nine of his neighbours, a heat combsite, and the plane's five crew members died.

So the luck of the Irish goes only so far. The plane crash is the worst of many calamities that befell Griffintown. The worst neighbourhood—home to Irish immigrants who fled the potato famine in the 1840s and to sev-

eral generations of their descendants—has endured floods, fires, riots and strikes. It's a colorful past that has won Griffintown a wall, a unhappy place in the literary imagination. In the acclaimed historical novel *Awag*, Ontario writer Jane Urquhart's heroine heads to Griffintown in search of her lover, only to encounter "ragged families huddled on discarded or tin rooftops," cry-

ing to escape a flood. Author Brian Moore chose Griffintown as the home for the hapless protagonist of his 1960 novel *Winters*. The Luck of Ginger Coffey. Even renowned historian Hughson Luskwood found only gloom there. In his 1942 book about his adopted home, *Montreal: Skyscrapers and City*, Luskwood teaches us Griffintown, and dismisses it as "a wretched area, where cumbled, shabby

houses rack in the wealth of Montreal," and "the flots of our industrial 'slums'."

You could only get the impression that Griffintown is the setting for Canada's own *Angels in Ashes*—a downcast area where impoverished Irishmen suffered unending misery. You could—but you'd be wrong. Because despite their hardships, Griffintowners felt rich in a way no outsider could

understand. "It's a paradise," says Betty Bryant, 71. "We were poor, but we didn't think we were poor." There was something special about Griffintown. I feel very forward to have grown up there." If Luskwood, a well-to-do professor of economics at McGill University, had dared to look beyond the facade of humble rowhouses, tucked between the Lachine Canal and the old brewery on



None-Dance Street, he would have discovered a lot, caring community of proud, spruced people. If he had knocked on the doors of the Murphys or the Heleys or the McCartridges, he may have gleaned a hint of their troubles. But over a cup of tea or, maybe, a pint, he might have noticed that the oldfolk on the kitchen floor was well-scrubbed. Maybe he would have pulled a chair up close to the wood stove to hear the tales of gifted storytellers, or joined in a songing around the piano in the parlour. The British-born Leacock may not have shared their lament for the Oldf' Sod, but he would certainly have shared in their laughter. Because in Griffintown, Canada's most famous immigrant world have encountered a collection of characters more entertaining than any in the site of Montpelier House, because I grew up there.

**HISTORIANS HAVE** given the neighbourhood only a few glancing paragraphs. In 1954, Paul de Choisy de Maisonneuve, the founder of Montreal, granted the land that would eventually become Griffintown to Jeanne Marie, a pious woman who, with the name of the Holy Virgin, made the city's first hospital. The nuns entered the parish of the seigneurial property for farming until Thomas McCord came along. In 1794, this carry 10th Protestant, having paid half of a new railway and a canal, walked the commercial potential of the deeply subterranean adjacent to the port of Montreal and acquired a 99-year lease on the property. He nearby lost it to a nearby Mary Griffin, whose husband, Robert, owned a nearby shipyard. Bought the contract—legally—from one of McCord's associates while he was abroad, McCord eventually reclaimed the property. In 1814, after a decade-long court battle, but by then Griffin's name had stuck.

At the height of the potato famine in the mid-19th century, as many as 30,000 Irish immigrants arrived in Montreal each year. Thousands died during quarantine in forest sheds, but many of the survivors settled in Griffintown. Jews were plentiful in what was Canada's first industrial zone, spurred on by the construction of the nearby Lachine Canal, the Grand Trunk Railway and the Victoria Bridge. But working conditions were grim: 15-hour days of back-breaking labour for a meagre wage—leading, in 1843, to one of Canada's first labour strikes.

Living conditions were atrocious in the

those early years. On low-lying land at the edge of the river, and lacking the sewers and paved roads that graced the wealthy "upper city," Griffintown was prone to flooding. Fire was also a constant threat to the mostly wood-frame buildings, one blaze in 1852 spread through half of Griffintown, leaving 500 families homeless. But those early immigrants—among them my great-grandfather, Danny Doyle and Sarah Coffey from County Cork—who were sturdy enough to survive the coffin ships and fever sheds, sunk their roots into Canada and transformed those shantytown conditions.

Over the next century or so, Griffintown grew into a vibrant, working-class neighbourhood. "Oh, yes, we suffered," says Charles Richetto, 96. The former Montreal fire department division chief remembers classrooms in St. Ann's where food of tuberculosis, and others forced to drop out of school. "They had to help feed the family," he says. But the descendants of the men who built the canal and the railway worked their way up to white-collar jobs in Griffintown produced in shade of success stories—wealthy businessmen, Olympic athletes, teachers, doctors, a federal cabinet minister. What makes Griffintown unique is that many chose to remain, even after they had made it. "Montréal Richetto used to speak of St. Urban Street—how it was in his blood," says Father Thomas McEneaney, 79, a member of the Order of St. Ann, born and raised in Griffintown. "That's the same kind of passion that Griffintowners have—a very warm feeling in our heart."

There's not much left of Griffintown. Students and artists, attracted by the funky charm of the few remaining houses, have moved in nearly a hundred of old homes. In 1963, the city reclaimed the area for industrial use. One by one, long-faded demolished residential properties, finished last remnants to remain. Huge swaths were flattened to make room for the Beauharnois Expressway. Then, in 1976, St. Ann's, the beloved parish church, was torn down. "They broke it three colours before they got the steeple down," says Antoinette Murphy, 85, who watched the demolition from her house across the street. "It was heartbreaking." A few years later, the wrecking ball returned to knock down St. Ann's Academy, polished to perfection by the nuns since 1864. The final blow came in 1998, when the city gave Griffintown its French name—Faubourg des Roccolles. For



Damage from the 1884 plane crash (top), class at St. Ann's Academy, 1945

the first order of immemorial to settle in Canada, Don Pidgeon, 66, the United Irish Societies' last organ and a former Griffintowner, still fixates over the decision. "It's saying the Irish never existed."

But you can't bulldoze memories. And the spirit of Griffintown is so impressive as the words that force the way through the bricks and stones it is now mostly vacant lots. "In this day, Griffintowners feel a connection," says Pidgeon, who leads tours of the neighbourhood. Leo "Clawhammer Jack" Leonard's Horse Palace, a stable that dates back before 1867, serves as an unofficial drop-in centre for nostalgic visitors who return to stroll through the empty streets, conjuring up a lost era. On one such occasion, McEneaney, looking over the park where St. Ann's Church once stood, began to sing the old neighbourhood hymn, "Oh, take me back to Griffintown, Griffintown, Griffintown, that's where I was born."

**WE ALL HAVE** our own private Griffintown. In McEneaney's, horses clatter down cobblestone streets, a school stands on nearly every corner, a wooden sidewalk lines Dupe Lane. In my Griffintown, Ford's and Chevys roll down paved streets, the blue glow of television shines out of a few windows, then only one team I remember the 1936, the first of McEneaney and Danny Doyle's 12 children, when the water had begun to flow in the cold-water and electric applications began to replace wood stoves and iceboxes. But it was the people who made Griffintown. Even as a child, I learned to measure the inexpressible life of the saints and sinners who inhabited our streets. "There was always something going on," says Bryant. "It was like theatre."



St. Ann's Church (top), the heart of the neighbourhood, was fire down in 1976 after Montreal razed the area for industrial use; after boys and cheerleaders pose outside of St. Ann's in 1946 (above), Griffintown's athletes excel on the basketball diamond at Basin Street Park (left)

Griffintown had the atmosphere of an old black and white movie. There's the Ball of St. Mary's, with drums and gongs and Irish bagpipes and choirs singing Latin hymns. Then there's the Flower Boys, the soft-breathed, tough guys who make coffee on the sidewalk. The sidewalks were long, and families walked and laughter, along with the old cheese and cheese, would flow through the streets, joining the whiff of yeast from the bakery, the scent of chocolate from Leacock's factory. The red-brick houses, hard to the sidewalk, made dramatic backdrop for some larger than life characters. Griffintowners found amusement in the sturdy arena of peddlers, milliners, ragmen and con men who made their way down the streets. "No one was ever lonely or bored," says John (Oscar) McEneaney Jr., 74. "Just living here, period, was funny." Hooked the Hat, the old lady who would

pull the hat off passersby with a long, curved stick, was gone by my time. So was Johnny Pith, a tall, wiry grandfather who would shuffle along, under his hat and blind scarf, providing foreman's solemn voice to children turning. "What's the weather, Johnny?" Herley recalls how, when the woman made his regular rounds, kids would run home and yell, "Here comes Sonny!" The woman drove a truck in the '90s, but, like Hanky in his day, we too would get hit off or from the back after transport. Free if there's no poppies.

Families were big, strong and traditional. "My mother, God love her, had her hands full," says McEneaney, the lone boy in a family of six children. "The women did the washing and scrubbed the floors by hand, cooked over a wood stove—a holy under one arm. But my mother would say, 'I was never so happy as when I had one in my belly and one

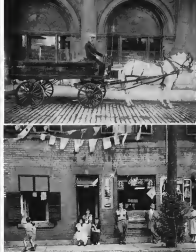
on one hip." And how would argue fathers' right to a girl or two in the evening. "There was a lot of drinking but you could see why," says Boyer. "The men had to go out and make a living at miserable bloody jobs. They had to have some relief. My father was a good, good person, but he would shoot craps with the guys in the line."

On fine summer evenings, we would sit on the front steps and chat with friends and neighbors out for a stroll. The guys would join their buddies on the corner. "That's what we did," says Hilsdon. "Go to work all day—those wetland jobs—go home, have supper, wash up, put on our peak caps, blue shirts and our tan shoes and hang around the candy store—all dressed up."

The Griffiths were punge, a fixture on almost every corner, could intimidate strangers but they gave us a sense of security—and entertainment. At one point there was police station on Young Street, but it closed after a year or so because there was so little crime. There were parks, however. Leonard Norwyle became a legend the day he walked out of his house—through a second-story window. "His mother was having fits," recalls Hanley. "She thought he jumped onto the sidewalk, but he jumped into a wagon full of oats." Sonny Howden, 65, a retired risk-way employee, remembers finding a novel way to get a cool breeze during the Depression. "We'd hop over the back of a mowing lawnmower, take a few bottles and throw them in the snowbank, then jump off and go collect them," he explains.

The priests did their best to keep little hands busy. In 1883, they founded the St. Ann's Young Men's Society to encourage "moral, upright living." They also built the three-story St. Ann's Hall, on Ottawa Street, complete with a library, bowling alley and concert hall, to accommodate jazz clubs, drama and debating societies. "I remember Father Murray saying, 'You might not be a good Catholic, but you'll be an educated Catholic,'" Bryant says.

St. Ann's Church was the heart and soul of Griffintown. Even the least devout attended mass every Sunday. God help you if you didn't. Hanley looks back with affection over on the discipline meted out by the Christian Brothers, who ran the boys' school. "They'd say to you on Monday morning, 'Did you go to church yesterday?' 'Noh.' 'Who said the mass?' 'Father Riccetti.' It wasn't Father Bazzani. 'Put your hand out,'



Thomas Henry Ogle, shown in the 1930s, led several bands of size in Griffintown for decades in horse-drawn wagons; residents like the streets for the annual Corpus Christi procession

they'd say. Out came the ruler. Oh boy, you'd have sore fingers." But the fear of God instilled by the stern priests and brothers was offset by Father Francis Kearney, the kind-hearted priest who always had the longest kinspe for confession. "Even if you madened someone," says Frank Dougherty, 74, a retired university professor raised in Griffintown, "he'd give you a full pep and one Hail Mary for a penance." Then, at the anomaly of the confessional, "he would ask, 'How's your mother, Frank?'"

Griffintown kids always had access to recreation then says McEneaney played street hockey with frozen horse manure for pucks. In Hilsdon's day, "You'd make your own ball with coal and paper." By the '50s, most of us had some bought rubber balls, but it still seemed strange to see one bounce into the sewer. St. Ann's Church for a leggy boy away enough to let us hold onto his arms, while

he dangled his feet over the truck to remove it. But most of our play took place in the big backyards shared by all the families in a block. In the winter, the older boys, running a hose from a kitchen tap, would make ice castles or a rink. Summer would bring baseball, kick-the-can and one-on-one three red-light. A few would head to the canal for a forbidden swim. But fear of the headless woman kept generations of us away from the corner of Williams and Murray streets, where the ghost of Mary Gallagher—a prostitute murdered in 1876 by a jealous rival—was believed to roam.

People took pride in helping each other. Hanley, whose parents had to sign up for relief during the Depression, remembers neighbors' generosity. "They were good people," he says. "Everybody was working. I was asking for them to share." And they understood why, in the fall, Andrew Ryan

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had to break a pane window. "He was harmless, an alcoholic who'd get annoyed so he could go to Borden Jail," Rickston says. "He needed a bed during the cold winter months." Nor was there any hesitation when Ryan knocked on the door at 95 Duke Street one day and asked Rickston's mother, "I have you got a pair of trousers for me?" As Rickston recalls, "She gave him my father's good trousers and he got halfway down the street and he sold 'em."

Nellie Howden's generosity earned her the nickname "Queen of Grifflins." That her heart of gold came roughly swapped was just as cogent: a heavy, baggy woman, she called her gentle husband, Arthur, "the old board," and lathered 12 children in line with a voice that could be heard blocks away. Soory and his brother, Norm, chuckle at the memory of doing tough talking mother. "She was scared of no one," says Norm, 74. "She cursed the same no matter who you were." Soory, 83, adds, "But if anybody needed help, she was there and everybody knew that." In Grifflintown, anyone who put on an odd coat expect to shop smart. Rickston recalls a response to one mild backpacker boss on a Sunday afternoon. "Mrs. Mulhally calls out, 'We're having a lovely roast of pork for lunch today.' And my mother said, 'Mary, the only pork you're going to have is a can of beans.'"

Entrepreneurial kids joined in the shenanigans on Victoria Day, setting off fireworks from their rocking chairs on the sidewalk. I remember weaving down the street, trying to avoid the swirling sparklers and bonfires that would explode underfoot. And everyone would have collected newspapers, old furniture and scraps for illegal bonfires. "On our street, they would gather rubber tires for the bonfire," says Bryant. "My granny would put in a lot of things too."

After that Irish Corpus Christi, an eleven feast celebrated with an outdoor procession in June, Grifflintowners would paint their shutters and wash their windows, then fill them with statues and flowers. "The men on our little block always put up an altar on our laneway," says Bryant. "Granny was Protestant but she loved the procession." The firemen at Station No. 3 would construct the most elaborate flower-bedecked altar.

Nothing could eclipse the excitement of St. Patrick's Day. As we burst through the big wooden doors of St. Ann's at the end of mass, the organ would pump the soaring strains of



Members of the Sodality of Our Lady (top), a women's group, march in the Corpus Christi processions on McCord Street in 1901; the cast poses after the 1946 St. Patrick's Day play

"Come back to Erin, Movements, Movements" night out onto the street, smack into the whims of bagpipes warming up for the parade. Montreal boasts the longest running St. Patrick's Day parade in North America and, from its start in 1824, Grifflintown made an impressive show. My father—then courted as trier of the year in 1998, two years before his death—never broke the family tradition of walking with the St. Ann's Young Men's Society, in his top hat rimmed with shamrocks. My sibling moment came in Grade 2 when I was chosen for the "happiest two-three"—the dance that opened the annual St. Patrick's concert-march of a re-narrating an Ireland we had never seen.

In 1984, I returned to Montreal for a Grifflintown reunion. Hands of fate as showed up for a weekend of memories that included a mass on the eve of St. Ann's Church and a "banquet" at the Coffee Pot, the café where

people used to congregate after church. And then there was the big event designed to put poor neglected Grifflintown on a map—or at least into the book of Guinness World Records. On the final day, we would raise the largest ever Canadian flag over our old neighbourhood. The nearest cars and the nearest were. We waited. There a bus went through the crowd. Nobody had thought to buy the world's biggest flagpole.

Disappointed, people started to leave. But the word went around: go to the Main Street park. There, the flag—big enough to cover a baseball field—was laid flat on the ground. We all took our places around it, gazed it up and waved it with our giddy might. We laughed so much we nearly cried. Because we're so fully Canadian now, but with enough Irishness left to delight in the memories and the friendship and the sheer joy of being alive. We are survivors. □



# A MUSEUM OF TOLERANCE

We need one, says the former head of the Canadian War Museum

**IT'S TIME** Canada had a national museum dedicated to the idea of tolerance. We find ourselves in an age when cultural confrontation is rising between the West and a newly militant Islam; between North and South because the possession of the world's wealth and those who are dispossessed. Behind these conflicts lie the concerns, fears and needs common to all human beings and their societies, however varied. Our nation state of the most multicultural in the world, yet we have no national teaching institution that shows us the end of intolerance, both in our own history and that of the world over. Canada, and its central role in conflict. As a threatened new nation, Canada needs such an institution.

In 1989, when the Berlin Wall fell, a wave of optimism and euphoria swept through Europe. The Communist empire was in retreat, and the prospect beckoned of a Europe, and perhaps a world, free of the divisive barriers and national enmities that had made the 20th century the bloodiest and most savage in history. But even as the armed, bipolar confrontation of the Cold War was dissolving, the naive assertions about the coming of a Golden Age of Peace were being silenced by the tragedy of ethnic cleansing in the Balkans, the unspeakable genocide of Rwanda, and the endless, grinding agony of the Israeli-Palestinian tragedy. History and cruelty still lay heavy throughout the world, and the United Nations, founded at the close of the Second World War by its shattered victors to bring an end to such barbarity, seemed powerless to act. Then, as the 21st century opened, the bloodiest violence had been mounted, unprovoked in scope and fuelled by an implacable hatred.

An angrier United States is calling with impatience for its allies—including Canada—to stand with it in a struggle against the underground militant Qaeda, and in a less conflicting war with Iraq, the consequences of

which will arguably be less likely the punishment of the dictator Saddam Hussein than the death and suffering of thousands of Iraqi men, women and children. Canadians are reacting to this latest call to arms with uncertainty. Our history shows we do not shrink from war if the issues are clear, the mission just, but to a degree not seen for a long time, we are being asked to make judgments, and take sides, on the basis of a black-or-white view of the world that declares the resolution of the nation lies most effectively with the force of arms.

Our uncertainty now comes at least in part from ignorance of the common issues that lie beneath the international threats and posturing, even as we are ignorant of those issues in our own history. Our national institutions of learning, the great federal museums, have compounded this problem by an inability to clearly examine the realities of how all communities in the Canadian and international human family see their histories, their grievances, and the dark things that have occurred because of these grievances. It is not just this understanding that is lost, and those different communities' views, would make us stronger. It would help us decide when to fight—and when to insist on a better way.

An example, young Canadians see rapidly losing sight of the causes or relevance of the Second World War. Yet it is not uncommon to meet a young German who has been taught a clear awareness of the history of Germany's Third Reich, and the end of the Nazis. That same student is equally aware of how racism and prejudice were present

throughout European society of the early 20th century, and how historical circumstances led them to surface in the horrific, cultural nation Germany was, leading to the nightmare of Hitler and the Second World War. To understand the roots of the Third Reich and why it had to be stopped is not only to remember Dachau or Buchenwald, but also to see the German nightmare as a possibility universal human failing. The responsibility for preventing future Third Reichs—and the threat of not preventing the one that did arise—lies with all.

The Canada of the 1940s was not immune to anti-Semitism; the government of Mackenzie King did not welcome Jewish post-war immigration, and, until 1942, McGill University had a quota on Jewish students who could be admitted to dentistry or medicine. To have a museum that helps understand that about ourselves is to see the Canadian of these years, but to understand their times with sympathy, the universality of the problems of hate and prejudice, and how far we have come in evolving as a tolerant nation.

We need a national museum that would tell us why, during the Second World War, Japanese Canadians were put into internment camps and their property confiscated, or seeing a deadly pogrom and settlement from the Canadian government only decades after the war's end. We need to understand not only the fears and worries of Canadians that led them to support such measures, but also what role simple racism played in this decision. We need a museum that would show how Chinese immigrants gave so much to the building of Canada on the railways and elsewhere, but made their way so full acceptance as Canadians over a barrier of bias that included a government "head tax" on Chinese newcomers, meant specifically to discourage their immigration. To learn this history, and to learn that we have become a nation whose government is a Canadian of Chinese origin, is to gain strength and



pride in ourselves as well as understanding.

We need a national museum that would teach us where international and ideological commitments find their source of fear and injustice, and the arguments behind their actions. Even in cases of despicable atrocities, regulation at the time would not stand in the way of an attempt to explain the chilling or criminal choices that led to them, beyond the purely criminal. We need to see why, in the ongoing agonies of the Middle East, both Israelis and Palestinians have themselves to be the aggrieved party. And we need to be taught more what lay behind the Rwandan genocide? How do Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland truly view each other, and why a disarmament so elusive? Can there be a rational explanation for the crimes of the former Yugoslavias, where Canadian troops fought a pitched battle at the Srebrenica

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# 'WAR IS NOT THE ANSWER'

An outspoken doctor draws stark conclusions from his trip to Iraq

**DR. DAVID SWANN** came to national attention last fall when he was fired from his job as medical officer for the Public Health Agency in southern Alberta. Swann, 33, had spoken out on several controversial issues, submitting in support for the Kyoto accord, on medical grounds. The public uproar over Swann's dismissal prompted the provincially appointed health authority to offer to reinstate him. He declined. Instead, Swann, a father of three grown children who has campaigned for years against the UN economic sanctions imposed on Iraq after the Gulf War, decided to dedicate himself almost full time to the peace movement. He spent five weeks last November and December in Iraq, representing Physicians For Global Survival. Along with Dr. Amir Khader, of the Montreal-based Médecins Du Monde, Swann met with doctors, nurses, and agency workers and ordinary Iraqis. The physician's report, entitled *Dying For Peace—Disaster Waiting On The Brink of War*, warns of a looming humanitarian crisis in the event of armed conflict. Swann, who lives in Calgary, recently gave a series of anti-war speeches across the country. Upon his return, he spoke with *Calgary's* *Evening* Chief Brian Neenan.

**During your month in Iraq, how free were you to meet with ordinary citizens?**

It's not easy. You are supposed to be a government minister with you. They set up the appointments. Eventually, though, they were so busy sending other visitors that they went ahead and met our own arrangements and go one created a flat. So about half of the time we were on our own. We had lots of good discussions with people.

**As a physician, what bothered you most about the state of health care in Iraq?**

Based on my understanding of what existed prior to the 1991 Gulf War—all modern health-care systems, free for all—was really disappearing to some. Electricity and water supplies are unreliable, at the children's hospital in Basra, they said they'd gone three

days without water at one point. Where water is available, it's not of a quality we would accept in Canada. There's a lack of physicians, nursing staff, medications and material support. They can't import certain medical technologies because of the sanctions. That's meant no new X-ray machines for 12 years, no chemotherapy equipment. Up to a third of the population is malnourished. Two-thirds of pregnant women are iron-deficient and anemic. A quarter of the newborn are of low birth weight.

**Who is to blame?**

The Iraqi blame the U.S.-led sanctions and the U.S., of course, blames Saddam. And that blame game goes on while we watch more than 100 children die daily from basic, preventable conditions, such as infectious diseases and malnutrition.

**How prepared are Iraqis to deal with the casualties of war?**

The health system is on the edge as it is. For example, we visited the largest neurological care center in the northern part of the country and they grossly indicated they had the capacity to deal with three head injuries at once. Three. You put that up against UN projections of 200,000 deaths, 500,000 casualties and one million refugees in critical need of food and housing support in the first month of war. There are clear to five million people in Baghdad, where it would be most of the bombing will take place. The water system will be immediately poisoned, the electrical grid destroyed. When you ask people how they're preparing for war, they say, "We've been living for 12 years." They blame the U.S. for their suffering. They don't believe Saddam has seized away their right to free speech and dissent. They believe the U.S. and the West have taken away the rest of their rights.

**What are some of the individual stories from Iraqi society that will stay with you?**

There's a mother I spoke with in Basra whose

family lives on Istisla Street—so dubbed after a story U.S. bombs hit there. One of her young sons was killed and his little brother had his head badly injured and his shoulder in his body. He spoke passionately about how people in Basra are suffering very badly because they are Shia Muslims and Saddam has not moved to help them. But the interest primarily at the U.S. and says that they in Basra are willing to fight if the Americans would. "With what?" I said. "With my kitchen knife," he replied.

**What other lasting impressions did you take away?**

The most important one is that war is not the answer. First, it would cause huge loss of life. It would also add tremendously to the anti-West feeling, not just in Iraq, but in the Arab region as a whole. It would undermine the UN, which has a charter that clearly states that war is justified only if a country is invaded, or to restore peace. It would be no destructive on so many fronts, with no guarantee of leaving anything better. The simplistic idea that regime change is going to change conditions for Iraqis is very arrogant and dangerous. The country has evolved the way it has for a lot of different reasons, including religious and ethnic differences. It's a mess.

**When it comes to Iraq, and the larger war on terrorism, do you acknowledge that, at least from the American point of view, things changed on Sept. 11?**

Absolutely. At the same time, many of us recognize the foreign policy of the U.S. has aimed that kind of suffering on populations around the world for the last 36 years—Neenan, El Salvador, Chile. In all these cases, the U.S. has not promoted democracy, it has undermined it.

**You've said this war is really about oil.**

Yes. Given the huge appetite for oil in the U.S., it's clearly of vital interest to them. George Bush and after Sept. 11, "No one is going to threaten our way of life." A threat



to the oil supply is obviously a threat to their way of life—and ours.

**You are highly critical of George Bush. But what's your view of Saddam Hussein?**

He's a terrible dictator. He's done a lot of damage to his country. He broke no laws. Everyone knows about his gassing of the Kurds and his starting of two wars.

**So if we don't impose sanctions or threaten military force, how do we deal with him?**

There are alternatives. It's been shown that he can be contained, though at a high price to his people. Sanctions should continue

on military weapons, but be lifted on the staples of life. Let the people get back on its feet, let the people restore to their jobs, let them rebuild their health care and education infrastructure. Let's provide some support for a civil society there and hope they can emerge with some alternatives to the way Saddam is governing the country.

**What about those who say the peace activists are dupes of Saddam, that you are, in effect, giving comfort to the enemy?**

That's very simplistic, though typical of the way many in the mainstream media have treated us, dumping us down on the con-

spiracies of this man and the perceived costs and risks of war. I don't see much more by such comments.

**After the national uproar over your firing by the Public Health Agency last fall, you were offered your former job back. Why did you decline?**

Two reasons. First, wasn't it a sincere offer? Second, I had been working on the anti-sanctions campaign for a number of years and felt that, with war looming, I needed to avoid more time in the peace movement. I thought it would be the ultimate in preventive medicine, to stop this war. □

# GETTING ADDICTS OFF THE STREETS

Controversy dogs Vancouver's plan for a supervised safe-injection program

**IT'S TUESDAY MORNING** in the suburban public toilets at the corner of Vancouver's Main and Hastings streets and things have changed. No one is peeing; no one is turning a crank. No one is trying to turn a crank. When people walk down the stairs, often a lot slowly, it is to use these city-owned facilities for their intended purpose. For more than eight years now, the formidable husband-wife team of Jim and Julie Scott has run this "coconut station." They've seen it all, here at the intersection of Pain and Whaling, as it's often called. But this new, relative calm is a rare and wonderful development.

Until a year ago, the Scotts were overwhelmed by residents, pounding waves of the addicted, who considered the toilets the closest they had to a safe drug consumption site. "It was getting really, really bad," says Julie, who saw teenagers as young as 11 or 12 being swept into the drug culture. Today, they may find one person a week instead of dozens a day trying to fix it in the toilets. They credit two initiatives, both started by the previous municipal administration. Reinstatement last fall by the city made the 80-year-old facilities less intimidating to the general public. And an extensive police presence on the corner slowed off the dealers.

Less than three months ago activist Mayor Larry Campbell took office with a mandate to end the Downtown Eastside's chronic drug-fueled protest, which has claimed more than 3,000 deaths by overdose in the past decade. But sweeping the streets off Cam's desk was more noise than cure, while a welcome example of political will, is more illusory than substantive. The drug trade has merely scattered a few blocks at a time. Now even the hard part.

Soon, likely by July or August, the neighbourhood will have the first sanctioned and supervised injection sites in North America for users of heroin and other illicit drugs. A community housing and advocacy group, the Portland Hotel Society, has already built a



The Portland Hotel Society's premises are a world apart from the Downtown Eastside

premise, with a comfy waiting room and six injection booths. For the moment, it stands unopened. Society CEO Don Iverson is confident the facility will be welcomed in a trial of safe injection sites that Ottawa plans to launch soon. Healthy Canada, an drafting criteria for the study, calls such sites "a protected space in which injection drug users can use their drugs more safely, cleanly and under less stress, and thus reduce the risk of overdose fatality or the transmission of infectious diseases." But the Portland group won't wait forever for the federal green light. Getting started soon, says Iverson, looking at several trial additions on the street outside, "would be the morally and epidemiologically right thing to do."

The problem is not unique to Vancouver. Toronto has some 10,000 to 15,000 injection drug users. Montreal and Vancouver about 12,000 each, according to estimates cited in the final report in December of the House of Commons special commission on the societal use of drugs. Cities considering

similar sites—including Montreal, Quebec City, Winnipeg and Victoria—as well as a disapproving U.S. administration (page 48), will be closely monitoring the Vancouver trial. Toronto has no similar plans—Ontario Health Minister Tony Clement has vowed to fight injection sites "every step of the way," saying there is no evidence they're effective. There are 40 or 50 such sites in the world, in Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands and Australia. Their effectiveness, the federal guidelines acknowledge, "remains to be demonstrated in terms of hard outcomes and rigorous evaluation methods."

Few will watch meistically shut veterans of the neighbourhood's drug wars. John Turner, executive director of the Downtown Eastside Youth/Activist Society, which began Canada's first needle exchange in 1988, isn't jumping on the injection-site bandwagon. He worries the initiative will focus resources on just one localized part of what must be a broad-based solution. "I don't want to belittle injection sites," he says. "Do the bloody thing, get on with it, but how about some treatment and detox while we're at it?" That treatment, he says, should be for the ready supply of drugs in the Downtown Eastside. "We'll Vancouver-only injection sites drive even more drug activity to the streets, they're not." "That potential would be totally reduced if we had adequate regional services that would address people in their own community."

Injection sites are the attention-grabbing part of Vancouver's so-called Four Pillars drug strategy. But prevention, treatment and enforcement are just as essential. That plan, with its underlying philosophy that addiction is a disease rather than a crime, was first championed at the core of his political career, by former mayor Philip Owen. But it was Campbell, a former chief of police of B.C. (and responsible for the popular Da Vinci suspect TV series), who led the credibility to sell the strategy to voters last November's municipal elections.

The idea has gained converts on a national



scale. The Commons commission on the non-medical use of drugs made harm-reduction measures a key part of an December report. Among its recommendations (needle exchanges) already in place in many cities to reduce the transmission of disease through sharing needles proposed to treat the most intractable addictions in Canada's largest cities with prescription heroin and the "safe" injection trials. The prevailing theory of the Liberal-dominated committee is that, to rehabilitate addicts, you must first keep them alive. But Canadian Alliance MP Randy White, a vice chair of the committee, has a different take, warning that the drug trials will amount to "de facto legalization of heroin" in Canada's major cities.

In Vancouver, Campbell's executive assistant, Geoff Meggs, concludes that the safe-injection trial "is a pretty modest program." Decriminalization, rehabilitation and enforcement, though, are much more expensive. The pilot, submitted to Ottawa by the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, includes two in-

ject and Julie Scott runs a public facility that used to draw hordes of broke users

person facilities: the Portland Hotel Society one, and one at the Dr. Peter Carnot for people with HIV/AIDS at the downtown St. Paul's Hospital, which has, in effect, operated since its inception for almost a year without using for federal approval. The plan would include counselling, but not key programs to wean addicts off drugs. "We've recognized we need to have the other components in place," says health authority spokesman Clay Adams, "but there's such a desire to move urgently that we're simply going ahead with it. The clinical trial will be over a three-year period and we'll have the other pieces fall into place."

That piecemeal approach worries many cash-starved agencies already on the tight boardwalk's front lines. Leo Demerens, the wise and openly incoherent director of the Vancouver North Health Society, fires up a cigarette and walks west from the society's

sanctuary operation on Hastings. With Aboriginal needle parks being infected by HIV at twice the rate of non-Aboriginals, a supervised site would seem to be a no-brainer to end. And Demerens isn't opposed, just leery of a half-baked approach. If the trial is to help, it can't be limited to drug injection, he says. "What do you do with the other 85 percent who are using any number of substances, not just using them, crack, injectable cocaine, methamphetamine, all of it?" he asks. "And they pour a lot of booze on top of all that." Will the sites be open 24 hours a day, he asks. Will they use the quality of over-the-counter before they're injected? "Who's going to pay for all that?"

A block party from the beleaguered corner of Main and Hastings, the atmosphere changes. Demerens worries among the displaced dealers and users, arising in a slushy, sticky haze along a row of dentist storefronts. His message is emphatic: in the mean he's chosen. The danger is that addicts and police are chasing the same thing a quick fix. ■





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## A DAY WITHOUT FOOD

Fasting for peace helped me pray for the Iraqi women who face hunger every day

**THE JOKE FORMED** itself in my head around 9:30 in the morning, though it was nearly eight hours later that I finally got to tell it. When someone asked, "How's the fast going?" I replied, "Slow!" By this time, I found it very funny.

A few days previously, I had read a press release from the Municipality General Commission inviting women of faith to fast each Wednesday. The purpose of this fast, running from mid-January to just before Easter, is largely to pray for a peaceful resolution to the situation brewing in Iraq.

Immediately, I knew it would do this. At the same time, I knew it would be tough. I have three young children and have not slept through the night in more than five years. Food has become a slow personal lullaby, giving me the boost of energy I need to get through an uncooperative sleep. Not that I eat that much, but even more than my babies did, I eat on demand. A little picky? Have a cracker. The hour when I want to nap but my kids don't? A handful of chocolate chips. Making supper? IT "uses" the sauce. My body uses insulin in the healthy zone and, chocolate chip aside, I eat meticulously. But milk, I eat, grazing throughout the day.

The first Wednesday arrived. MGC had asked participants to fast from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m., and to use the time and energy normally spent eating to pray instead, particularly for the vulnerable members of Iraqi society—women and children—who have suffered the most from economic sanctions and who may bear the greatest consequences of military action. I woke early and ate a small bowl of hot cereal—similar to the small portion of rice or cereal that an Iraqi woman might eat each morning—before the clock struck seven.

Having given birth naturally, I knew my body could obey my will, so the question wasn't whether I would eat or not; it was how tough it would be. A friend who had fasted before said I wouldn't even notice a day—it was the third day that was always the hardest, and it was on the fifth day, when she

found herself shivering with cold and reading cookbooks for pleasure, that she eased back into food again.

Around 11:30, I hit the first wall. Normally I grabbed a muffin before picking my son up from school. Instead, I drank a cup of tea. Throughout the day, I drank my ration cups of tea, hot water and juice in a mug that read, "I can do all things through Christ Jesus who gives me strength." Still, I felt shaky.

We had to stop to mail some letters at the post office. My toddlers kept picking up bags of candy near the entry registers, asking for treats. It wasn't as easy to put the packages back on the shelves as it normally was, but we did it.

Preparing lunch for the kids, I was unusually aware of what I was doing, about how fortunate my family was, even in Canada, to have full cupboards with choices for lunch. I looked at the little holes in the bread as I cut it. I smelled the peanut butter and feta glide over the bread. My kids were oblivious to the fact that my lunch was a glass of tomato juice or that the grace I

would was more heartfelt than perfunctory. It was working, though. My eldest, seven, was leading me to pray for other women who fasted this regularly, day after day. I looked at the round faces and alert eyes of my children, and remembered that many mothers face the agony of not being able to feed their children. Let alone themselves.

The mail came, and with it was a magazine from a relief agency, with a photo about hunger (Coincidence? I think not.) The article presented staggering statistics: 10 million people in Africa are at risk of dying due to starvation alone. It told the story of a mother and her two young sons, searching for grains in the dirt and eating nutritional grains. I prayed for them, too.

The kids asked for a snack, and I prepared it before taking yet another trip to the bath room. I hoped that the liquid going through me had a cleansing effect.

After the plate burst out, I felt weary. I prepared supper, then escaped to mindless chatter on the Internet to pass the time. The feeling of streams had faded and the hunger was less fiery now. I was conscious of how privileged I was, that even this small discomfort was a challenge. I had gone much longer without food when stressed, but never when I had time and inclination to enjoy a meal.

By the time we sat down for supper, the end was in sight. My husband assured me not to join the family, but despite being impatient and potty, I did, jumping up with intense energy anytime someone needed anything. My daughter offered me a bite of her food. I declined, saying I wasn't hungry, then laughed. My eyes drifted from the full plates to my watch. Only 45 minutes left. One of the kids said he was full and that that people somewhere was starving. Someone ate the last date square and I swallowed a groan.

At 7 p.m., I was reading stories to the kids and excited myself. They followed and discovered me scolding down macaroni and cheese. I looked at them, feeling a need to exhale from the fast (and to inhale the food!) as the tension I had carried all day came out. I imagined how it must feel to carry that tension day after day, and not be able to let it out and not to have the satisfaction of a full belly. And I prayed once again for peace.

Susan Fish is a freelance writer in Waterloo, Ont. To comment, write to [fish@maclean.ca](mailto:fish@maclean.ca).



ILLUSTRATION BY BRIGITTE LAMONTAGNE



The author sits in with the Chebucto Big Band at one of its weekly rehearsals.

ing from some long-gone playground off-roast-signalling me to solo for a few bars in the middle of *Rock Around the Clock*.

Was that the particular moment when I realized the folly of picking up an instrument hand in life? Not by a long shot. That could have been years earlier, when I was living in Toronto, and my next-door neighbours applauded through the wall when I finally managed to hit a trumpet C. Perhaps it was seeing in the waiting room before my lesson began at the Canadian Conservatory of Music in Halifax and noting that I was two feet taller than any of the elementary school-aged kids gathered there. It could have been the moment I was caught painting nudes in my car in the parking lot at a beach in Prince Edward Island in the middle of winter. Or any number of times when someone secretly walked into the room and witnessed me as a married father with responsibilities—eyes closed, moving my mouth demagogically as Charlie Parker on hero, as I ascribed through *Rock, Rose, Rose* four bars or some other equally challenging number.

Yes, deciding to learn a musical instrument as an adult can be such a humbling experience that it's surprising people do it at all. Yet, they do. There are some practical reasons. Trying to work your way through a Chopin étude on the piano will help fend off Alzheimer's disease, and so we're told. Want your kid to headline Carnegie Hall some day? According to the popular Suzuki method, if a parent plays an instrument first, it will assure the child's natural desire to copy mom or dad. But there's more to it than that, something to do with the sheer joy of music. How else to explain the fact that among my circle of acquaintances, there's an entrepreneur who recently picked up the French horn after a 20-year hiatus, a plumber who has started penning poems on the accordion, and a sports broadcaster teaching himself to play old English numbers on the piano. I know a lawyer who plays Cape Breton-style keyboard, an insurance manager who likes to rock Marianne Delta blues on his acoustic guitar, and an ahem serious, German-winning television writer and producer who got so nervous before her weekly piano lesson that she'd close a mid-afternoon glass of wine.

Since my wife sneaked up on my late grandfather's alto and gave it to me for Christmas 15 years ago, I've taken lessons on and off from six different teachers in three different cities. I have to say I don't cry them. Yet the thing is, even though I sometimes wonder about the studying and practicing I haven't worth it. I can't imagine giving up the sax. Like everything about it: the feel of my fingers on the worn-down keys, the way my entire head vibrates when I play in the lower register. I particularly like the way blowing the thing tends to focus the mind—to reduce all a fillet's worries to the act of trying to focus tolerable sound through a couple of feet of dirty metal. It's only lately that I've made any discernible headway. The person responsible, 32-year-old Trevor Demoff, a composer and sax player who teaches at Dalhousie University, didn't need to worry about my glacial progress. "It's harder when you're older," he asserts. "Biologically, kids have an advantage when puberty hits there's a growth spurt in their brains and they start building synapses faster."

It may be tougher to get it when you're older, but it's not impossible. And if you already learned when you were young, you don't necessarily lose your chops when you get to certain age. All that's apparent most Mondays at 6:30 p.m., when members of the Chebucto Big Band struggle into St. Matthew's Church in downtown Halifax. It's a diverse lot—doctors, lawyers, teachers, university professors, a government bureaucrat, some retirees, a software consultant, a waitress—with an average age somewhere in the late 40s. At 48, Rob Sanford, a real estate agent who joined three years ago, is one of the newest. But he's no rookie. Back in the 1970s he played trombone in a Halifax-based R & B group and even tried to make it as a musician in Los Angeles before quitting altogether. One day in 1999, he picked up a trumpet on a whim. Now he's one of the mainstays in the band's trumpet section. "For me, playing the trumpet is right up there after sex," says Sanford. "Right now, actually, they're probably about dead even."

Alan Melvire, 63, a retired marine biologist who plays saxophone, joined seven years ago for the camaraderie and to improve his sight-reading skills. What a revelation it was, then, to discover that playing music also unlocked an untrapped creative side. Along with the band, he also plays in his church orchestra, paints and writes poetry, and is plotting to both write and illustrate a children's book. "Life is short," he says. "Make the most of it."

Even if, at times, it can make the stomach churn. To me, improvisation—the making of instant melody—is the magic of jazz. And when the solos start there's no place to hide, even in the biggest band. "Dave has given us all motivation to try to put some of ourselves in the music," says George Davis, 51, a plastic surgeon who unleashes a smooth, spontaneous 32 bars of *Bass, Straight Ahead* on the corner sax when his roomie at cokes. The next time a solo rolls around, others put up their hands like schoolchildren, eager for a chance to show their skill. But not everybody likes to be in the spotlight. Linda

**I like everything about it: the feel of my fingers on the worn-down keys, the way my head vibrates when I play in the lower register**

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Ris, a 57-year-old mother of two who could rattle play a note on the bass when she joined the band 13 years ago, tries to ignore James when he calls her name. Eventually she complies, slipping a chorus of *That's Amore* snazzy ditty in the middle of Miles Davis's *All Blues* to James's obvious approval. "I don't like improvising," she concedes afterwards. "I know it's good for me musically but I just can't get used to it."

I guess when he points it at me, too. I'm not really nervous, which is weird since my fingers normally go spastic when someone hypes me to play. So I just start banging away the best I can. My left foot pounds the floor like Stampie. Horn notes somehow emerge, childlike by the standards of everyone else in the room. "But I've played worse—a whole lot worse, actually. When my right bars are up, I don't even notice and just keep coming on to the rest of the band like back in Melvire. When I'm scared next to, waves a friendly hand to quiet me down. I grin, embarrassed. But I'm almost thinking about the next solo, whenever it might come. The old bassist is just never going to feel quite the same again.

## SONGS OF EXPERIENCE

It's tough to master an instrument when you're older, but it can also be exhilarating

IT'S NOT EVERY DAY that a grown man's bubble bursts so emphatically. "There's no pressure," says Dave James, a childhood friend, when I ask about sitting in with his 22-piece, Halifax-based orchestra, the Chebucto Big Band. "If you want to play a note, go ahead. If you don't, just sit there." After years of blasting away on my grandfather's alto saxophone alone in the basement, I harboured the delusion that I might be able to hold my own with the Chebucto. And James, the band's musical director, had used the word "saxophone" to describe the weekly rehearsal. Which might be true if you've played the drums with Zoot Sims, Moe Koffman and a host of other jazz greats, so the bar. But when they fly Blackbird to your signature tune—well, let's just say

spending a couple of hours trying to keep up with a touring jazz orchestra can be a daunting experience.

The charts looked like ancient Hittite. The tempo was so fast it induced vertigo. At times, I took the lead out of my mouth and sat there dazed.

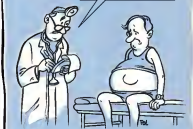
**The charts looked like ancient Hittite. The tempo induced vertigo. At times, I took the lead out of my mouth and sat there dazed.**

*Dairyville*

By Dairy Farmers of Canada



*I think you need to cut down on the doughnuts, Mr. Dodd.*



*Fact: Cheese and yogurt are more nutritious snack choices.*

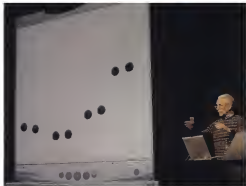

**BOOKS | 54**  
**A Montaner**  
**takes Maine**

Belmont Jay Corry grew up in New Brunswick, lives in Maine and writes of living by the sea.


**FILM | 54**

Thus Beckham looks like a girl

British crowd-pleaser *Beetli* like Beckham is bound to appeal to North American audiences, whether or not they've heard of the footballer in the title. It's a hilarious and warm portrait of Indian parents coming to grips with their child's Western integration.


**Math | What's the equation for communication?**

First off, try to get past the unsexy moniker. The Banff International Research Station for Mathematical Innovation and Discovery is the first of its kind in North America and only the third in the world (the others are in Germany and France). For 40 weeks each year, the \$5-million think-tank—dubbed BIRS, for short—will bring together a total of 2,000 of the world's best and brightest mathematicians at the Banff Centre.

If they are true to their calling, the math mavens will remain oblivious to the Rocky Mountain splendour and focus instead on some of the greatest brain-teasers of our time. In addition to pure research, the scholars are expected to pass light on how math can help explain everything from the spread of the West Nile virus to the origins of the universe.

Ingenius doesn't believe in dumbing down math to living it to the masses.

**THE BIRDS**  
 The first workshop, "Recent Developments in Spectral Theory," starts on March 25. For more schedules at banffcentre.org, visit press.math.ca/birs

BIRS also hopes to bring math to the masses by, among other things, paying visiting researchers in to giving public lectures.

One of the guest speakers at the think tank's Feb. 28 official launch was Jay Ingram, the popular co-host and producer of *Daily Planet*. Ingram's speech on the challenges of communicating math was not exactly encouraging. In the course of a 30-second and TV career, Ingram can recall doing only one program on pure math—about an English researcher who'd devised a formula for figuring out what day of the week any date is on the past full on. "What's a formula for many people," said Ingram, "is that math seems arcane and involves complex data." All the same, he was likewise about dumbing down the subject. "I think plain, clear information can work just as well as pretending that Aviri Langue really loved math before she dropped out of high school."

—BRIAN JOSEMAN

**Listings | Art and beauty**

**New Year 2010**  
**March 21-23**  
 Expected to attract more than 20,000 people, the anti-war show offers the latest information on cosmetic surgery, cosmetic dentistry and dermatology. Toronto.

**Royal Manitoba Winter Fair**  
**March 31-April 5**  
 First established in 1908, this event—which drew over 200 competitors from across North America—has grown to be one of Canada's largest agricultural fairs. Brandon, Man.

**Canvases of War**  
**Until May 26**  
 A timely exhibit at the Glenbow Museum of nearly 70 paintings by First and Second World War artists. Drawn from the Canadian War Museum's national collection, this show originated in 2004 at Ottawa's Museum of Civilization. Calgary.

**Betty Goodwin**  
**Until April 20**  
 The latest first contemporary art exhibition at the Montreal exhibit highlights the main stages in the career of this established Quebec artist—who last week was named a member of the Order of Canada's Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts. Montreal.


**People | In the Stratusphere**

You'll never think to look for a famous wedding site in the suburban community of Richmond Hill, Ont.—but that's exactly where you'll find *Wish Stratus: The World's Worst Entertainment Diva* doesn't ring from her room and all resides in her home town. "I bank in the same bank as always," she says, "and go to the same hairdresser." Meanwhile, Stratus, who's on the road 300 days of the year, is known and loved by wedding fans for her combination of an appeal and brute strength. "Wearing a halter, leather trench coat and cowboy hat, she'll wow an audience with 'Stratusfistion'—a gravity-defying acrobatic manoeuvre that

leaves her opponent face down on the mat. But Stratus, 27, is more than just heavy and heavy. Studying biology and kinesiology at York University, she was finishing the last year of a four-year degree—and planned on applying to medical school—when a 1997 faculty strike sidetracked her studies. "I think the teachers for going on strike to this day," she says. As a result, Stratus took up as a receptionist at a gym—which led to modelling for fitness magazines, before being hired by the WWF (now WWE). Her first pro gig was at a water, drenched in shocks, cowboy hat and low-cut top, accompanying tag-team wrestlers Tex and Albert into the ring. Stratus's popularity exploded in no time—thanks to some wild (and staged)

On one of her rare days off, the WWE Babe of the Year chills out at her suburban home.

heel-crunching and hair-pulling incidents. Although Stratus is currently in the height of her wrestling career—she's been named WWE Babe of the Year two years in a row—she needs more mellow future. "I would like to be a mom," she says, adding she could finish her degree during the pregnancy. She loves decorating and might be interested in an interior design career. "I can't wait for the day when I can decorate my house in every holiday," she says. "I'll be one of those people that, come February, puts hearts all over the lawn." Turns out, this wrestler's a bit of a softie. ROBERT HOOGMOED





'What interests me is people who choose what we perceive as a simpler life—and how complex those lives are'

Dietha, a former BBC news-journalist, drew her movie's designed message from her own experience. "Like all Indian parents, mine wanted me to be a doctor," she says. "But, it not a doctor, then a pharmacist. But when I said I was going to pick up journalism, they were like, OK. It's good to have a voice." As to film-making, Dietha still relies on the skills she acquired as her old profession. "When I got into the calling room, I became a journalist," she says. "That's why my films tell everybody's side—the parents, the kids."

Phoebe may be watching too many movies, but she's right to want a sequel: Elizabeth says with you after the reveal is finished. She's a character that many women understand—she has the devotion of a wonderful laborer-fisherman, but is under the spell of her first love, a destructive seducer. 30 years her senior. And she begins to grow through having children. "When I look at the path of this book," says Corey, "and the success it has had so far, it's women handing on to other women—therein." [www.fox.com](http://www.fox.com)



every point of view. It's that BBC imperious little "The result is that audiences around the world have celebrated the film—and it got a thumbs-up from a fellow reviewer: David Beckham, along with his wife Victoria (and, *Posh* Spins), watched the film at a private screening in Manchester, England, while making matches. "We loved. It's really brilliant," he recalls. Chabala, "and he's complete star of the occasion. He couldn't believe the girls were 16 years old!" Although the Beckham clan aren't appearing in the film, look-alike actors were used in their place. And it does all happen to be any Canadian's unfamiliar with this German footballer. Chabala's spread to out there quite slick. After all, he's never heard of Wayne Gretzky. **B+**

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3. THE LITTLE FISHES, *It's a Wonderful Life* (1946)
4. GROSSBACK OF FINEARTS, *Robert D. Taylor* (1912)
5. LIPKALSK, *Carol Shields* (1977)
6. THE LAST GROUNDING, *Gay Hendricks* (1993)
7. THE KING OF NIGHTS, *InterContinental* (1912)
8. THE MANAGER OF NEW YORK, *Myra Reynolds* (1912)
9. PUTTING A STOP TO IT, *William Adams* (1912)
10. THAT OLD FINE IN THE HOUSE, *Max Reynolds* (1912)
11. MURDER (Alvin Karpis)

- |    |  |  |
|----|--|--|
| 1  | PAINT (by Margaret Atwood) (201)                             |  |
| 2  | SHAME (by Hilary Mantel, Richard Morris) (20)                |  |
| 3  | MIDWINTER SOLAR AND THE POPE'S GROOMING (by Lisa Klein) (20) |  |
| 4  | THE RIGHT MAN (by David Peace) (17)                          |  |
| 5  | WINTER WOUNDS (by David Peace) (16)                          |  |
| 6  | DEEP AT SEA (by John Woodcock) (14)                          |  |
| 7  | THE TWO FACES OF ISLAM (by Ibrahim Alkhatib) (13)            |  |
| 8  | THE SILENT COMPASS (by Michael Ondaatje) (13)                |  |
| 9  | LOW THE WATER, HIGHER OF DESTRUCTION, (by D. S. Bailey) (13) |  |
| 10 | THE SILENT COMPASS (by Michael Ondaatje) (13)                |  |
| 11 | THE SILENT COMPASS (by Michael Ondaatje) (13)                |  |

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## HOW FAR IS TOO FAR?

Whistler's exactly where it always was, yet that was a shock to the visiting IOC

**HERE'S A HEADLINE** you don't read in British Columbia everyday: "Ottawa brings millions to Vancouver: Christie, Clark have money for transit, bridges." You see a message like that, splashed across the top of the *Vancouver Sun*, and you've got to think something is amiss: maybe solar flares (an early April Feb's it's been unusually warm). Or, more likely, there's a federal election on and they forgot to tell us all in B.C.

When Vancouverites are told to, elected Liberals bring this on the ground, anchored like "Christie makes annual trek west for party fundraiser." This aberrant westward flow of money and love, of course, was linked to the arrival last week of 18 members and staff of the International Olympic Committee's evaluation commission, the second of three trips for the committee as members weigh competing bids for the 2010 Winter Games. It wouldn't be the Olympics without self-competition. Vancouver's chief rival is Salzburg, Austria. But the IOC, happy to stir the pot, let it be known the South Korean city of Pyongchang, considered the third place bid, need its recent inspection tour.

The pressure was on to do likewise in Vancouver and Whistler, where most skiing and sliding events would be held. The result was an air of uncertainty last week, as though all Vancouver was grinning during a Doris audition. The same can be said of Whistler most any time. There's a real village in there somewhere, but the instant an official enters, the bell rings and the ever-changing cast of awarded visitors give the sense you've stumbled into a movie shoot. That was a bad thing. The Olympics are sport underwritten by an orgy of marketing, and Whistler is a world-class backdrop.

Until last week, the greatest impediment to success rested in continuous Vancouver, where nothing happens without a protest and where, as a result, nothing frequently happens. It took a city-wide referendum on Feb. 22 to settle the issue. The result, just one cheeky week before the IOC's arrival, was a 64-per-cent Yes for hosting the Games.

While there remains a vocal opposition, selected Vancouver bid director Jack Poole rightly claimed victory. Getting two-thirds of Vancouverites to agree on the time of day would be an achievement. Getting them to agree to host a global sporting event is, like the credit card ad goes, priceless.

OK, not priceless. The bid committee's estimated cost is almost \$2.9 billion. The operating costs, about \$1.55 billion, are expected to be covered by Games income. Other major expenses: \$400 million to upgrade the scenic but dusty Sea-to-Sky Highway to Whistler, \$510 million in sports venues and athletes' villages, a \$110 million "legacy" fund to operate the facilities post-Olympics. The federal government would pay \$330 million. The province is on the hook for the remaining \$1.2 billion, and any further deficit. Ah, but you'd have to look way back to find a truly massive Olympic debt—all the way to Montreal in 1976.

Still, even issues of money aside, to be in Vancouver last week was to be hugged in a fancy embrace. Office towers were draped in huge banners. A weekend street carnival



PM and jockey, smiling as hard as they can

draw 50,000 downtown. It was a hint of the give that over: Calgary in 1988.

Behind the smiles, though, an air of manic frenzy blazed at the stakes. Olympic volunteers were urged to report No-side graffiti so it could be removed by the city. Jean Chrétien and Premier Gordon Campbell did ad-hoc photo ops on the slopes. Vancouver dailies offered the kind of glowing, blather coverage usually reserved for visiting popes or queens. The bid committee, all business, was dressed identically in severe blue suits, crisp shirts or blouses, and neckties for the men—as though they'd thought a hole of surplus clothing from their Mormon counterparts in Salt Lake City.

The selection process, however, is a world away from Utah. Time was, all-ages-expected visits, swag gifts and maybe the need overnight affliction of an athletic supporter were part of wooing more malleable IOC members. That changed after bid-buying negotiations for the 2002 Salt Lake City Games threatened to bring down the Olympics. The new rules—no visits, no official visits, no gifts—mean last week's evaluation report carries much weight in the IOC's final selection on July 2 in Prague.

As a result, every bural anecdote of Gerhard Heiberg, the affable and inamenable Norwegian evaluation chairman, was analyzed for hidden meaning. It came, then, as a welcome shock on March 1 when Heiberg suffered an "are we there yet?" moment in the midst of a postcard-perfect Whistler day. "One publication only," he told a TV crew of his location to Whistler, "it's too far from Vancouver." The comment raised both questions and hurdles. If the distance—about 111 km of winding road—in a final flaw, why did the IOC let B.C. waste tens of millions in a futile bid? By mid-afternoon Heiberg was employing the style of damage control that Vancouver would the IOC well. "I have not," he stressed, "said it's too far."

The tension flared, and Poole wisely laughed off the incident. "We explored the notion of moving Whistler a little closer to Vancouver," he said, "and abandoned that early on in the game." And really, no highway is dangerous enough to doom a bid. It takes the treacherous turns of IOC politics to do that kind of damage. You can but smile and hope, and bring your chequered book.

Ben MacQueen is a Montreal-based sports columnist. Email: benmac@shaw.ca

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